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Immigrant Settlement and Multiculturalism Programs for Immigrant, Refugee and Visible Minority Women: A Study of Outcomes, Best Practices and Issues

A report submitted to the British Columbia Ministry Responsible for Multiculturalism and Immigration
by
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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

INTRODUCTION 10
Purpose of the Study
Methodology
Social Demographic Background of Immigrant, Refugee and Visible Minority Women
Overview

SELECTED LITERATURE REVIEW 15
Background
Rethinking the Terms
Alternative Perspectives
Policy Research Related to Immigrant and Refugee Women
Gender and Economic, Labour and Immigration Policies
Bilingual, Multicultural and Education Policies
Gender, Multicultural and Citizenship Policies
Community and Social Integration
Immigrant Services
Best Practices and Outcomes Performance Measurement
Development of Indicators
Summary

OUTCOMES 35
Introduction to Qualitative Outcomes Tables
Levels of Outcomes
Types of Outcomes
Discussion of Outcome Statements
Analysis Challenges
Conclusions and Further Questions

"BEST PRACTICES" AND STRATEGIES 45
Program Planning and Design
Recruiting Participants and Advertising
Community Outreach and Recruitment
Selecting Participants
Determining Group/Class Size
Retaining Participants and Sustaining Interest
Finding Space and Scheduling
Finding Speakers
Resolving Conflicts and Tensions
Evaluating Programs
Making Referrals
Dealing with Language Barriers
Finding and Working with Partners

PERCEPTIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS AROUND "IMMIGRANT WOMEN" 54
Approaches to "Immigrant Women" as a Target Population
Funders and Immigrant Women as a Target Group

The Social Construction of Immigrant Women
Women as Mothers, or: Women Equals Family?
Summary and Recommendations

EMPOWERMENT/DISEMPOWERMENT OF RACIALISED WOMEN 63
Individual Empowerment
Group Empowerment
Institutional/Organisational Empowerment
Governance and Administration
Challenges and Barriers to Empowering Racialised Women in Funded Programs
Summary and Recommendations

WORKING CONDITIONS AND FEELINGS OF DISEMPOWERMENT AMONG RACIALISED WOMEN WORKERS IN THE IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT SECTOR 69
Occupational Segregation
Volunteerism
Lack of Voice and Representation
Summary and Recommendations

INTEGRATING AN ANTI-RACISM GENDER FRAMEWORK AND GENDER ANALYSIS 79
Intersectional Gender Analysis
Mainstream Women's Groups, Immigrant Women's Groups and Racialised Women
Gendering Immigration and Multicultural Policy

MRMI FUNDING POLICIES 85
CLD's Programs, Policies and Practices
Overall Funding Context of Immigration and Multiculturalism Sector
Strategies for Dealing with Funding Pressures in the Sector
Summary and Recommendations

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS 93
Summary
Recommendations

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Glossary of Terms 103
Appendix 2 Case Profiles 104
Appendix 3 Interview Themes 139
Appendix 4 List of Participants 144
Appendix 5 References 145

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Individual Level Outcomes
Table 2 Program Level Outcomes
Table 3 Organisational/Institutional Level Outcomes
Table 4 Community Level Outcomes

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMSSA	Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of B.C.
ACS	Abbotsford Community Services
ARM	Anti-racism and Multiculturalism Program
BCAMP	B.C. Anti-racism and Multiculturalism Program
BCIVMW	Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of B.C.
BCSIWA	B.C. Settlement and Integration Workers Association
BFLI	Burnaby Family Life Institute
CLD	Community Liaison Division
COV	City of Vancouver
CPP	Community Partnership Program
ICA	Inter Cultural Association of Greater Victoria
IICC	Immigration Integration Coordinating Committee
ISP	Immigrant Settlement Program
ISS	Immigrant Services Society of BC
LINC	Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada
MFC	Multicultural Family Centre
MOSAIC	Multilingual Orientation Service Association for Immigrant Communities
MRMI	B.C. Ministry Responsible for Multiculturalism and Immigration
MWE	B.C. Ministry of Women's Equality
NSMS	North Shore Multicultural Society
PIRS	Pacific Immigrant Resources Society
SWC	Status of Women Canada
WGOP	Working Group on Poverty
WWRS	Westcoast Women's Resource Society

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Immigrant, refugee and visible minority women as a group are marked by diversity. Changing immigration policies, world migration patterns, the women's movement, and official multiculturalism have all contributed to their emergence from the shadows of the policy arena. Governments at all levels have turned their attention to the diverse needs of this group of women, in large part because research and women's organisations have revealed that immigrant and visible minority women face barriers in accessing the benefits and rights of Canadian citizenship.

Immigrant women are a growing proportion of the Canadian population. Although the proportion of females to males in the general Canadian population has stayed at around 50%, the proportion of female immigrants to male immigrants is higher at around 52%, reaching a high of 53% in 1996. The greater proportion of female immigrants with origins in countries of Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America, means that immigrant and refugee women are also "visible minority" women. Two-thirds of visible minority women in Canada are foreign born. But the term "visible minority" is itself problematic since, as defined by Statistics Canada, it excludes First Nations women who are also marked by their "difference" from mainstream women.

The terms referred to above are often used as synonymous and interchangeable in official and popular discourses, reinforcing popular perceptions of immigrant, refugee and visible minority women as belonging to one group, unified by their "difference" from the dominant white, Anglo-European majority group. Their assignment to a universal collective category hides and obscures their diversity and a concerted effort must be made by policy makers and the public alike to take apart these commonly held assumptions. Government has come to recognize this diversity and has attempted, in partnership with community organisations, to develop policies and programs to address the differing needs of "racialised" women.

Purpose of the Study

In recent years, through consultations with community representatives active in immigration settlement, integration, multiculturalism and anti-racism work, immigrant and visible minority women have consistently been identified as a priority category for funding by the Community Liaison Division (CLD) of the BC Ministry Responsible for Immigration and Multiculturalism (MRMI). As part of MRMI's performance measurement plan for immigrant services programming, this study was commissioned to:

- provide information demonstrating the link between funded projects and the Ministry's mandate;
- improve the Ministry's program design, planning and decision-making;
- contribute data to the Ministry's performance measurement initiative;
- show accountability for funds allocated; and,
- increase sectoral capacity to develop effective projects.

Methodology

A two-phase qualitative study was conducted with ten projects recommended by MRMI, using the following selection criteria: location (urban, suburban, rural), model of program delivery, project/program objectives and MRMI funding source. Sponsoring organisations for the Phase I projects were: Pacific Immigrant Resources Society (Vancouver), Burnaby Family Life Institute (Burnaby), North Shore Multicultural Society (North Vancouver), and Inter Cultural Association (Victoria). Phase II included six additional sponsoring agencies: Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of B.C. (Vancouver), Multicultural Family Centre (Vancouver), MOSAIC (Vancouver), Immigrant Services Society of BC (Vancouver), Abbotsford Community Services (Abbotsford) and Westcoast Women's Resource Society (Ucluelet), as well as the City of Vancouver's Community Services Funding Program.

Findings

Research literature reviewed indicated the need to rethink the terms by which the target population is identified. The terms, "racialisation", "feminisation" and "intersectionality" were introduced as key concepts for analysing the data.

There was very little policy-related literature directly relevant to best practices and performance indicators related to immigration settlement and integration services for immigrant women. Due to the lack of policy-oriented research on performance outcomes and indicators, and best practices in this field, the study makes several recommendations related to research.

Program Outcomes

Respondents identified several types of project outcomes which were classified in a matrix along two dimensions:

- Levels of outcome statements: individual, program, institutional/ organisational and community;
- Types of outcomes: intended, unintended and contradictory.

In general, respondents found it more difficult to identify direct outcomes at the institutional and community levels, unless projects were conceptualized as a community-level project at the outset. There were problems in drawing links from individual and program level outcomes to community level outcomes. Questions regarding the link between qualitative and quantitative indicators were raised.

Best Practices

A list of "best practices" was compiled from responses related to support programs for immigrant women. This list should be considered a preliminary and may be used as a starting point for a future compilation of indicators of successful practices.

Perceptions of the Target Population of Immigrant, Refugee and Visible Minority Women

The study revealed a number of important findings related to the relationship between program design and outcomes, and perceptions of the target group.

Overall, respondents tended to view immigrant women in their domestic roles as mothers and wives. This view also underlies a large number of funded programs that focus on the concerns of "women in the family" and a limited number of programs addressing other concerns of racialised women.

Perceptions of "needs" were linked to program design. Four different program development approaches were identified: gender-specific, needs-based; gender-neutral, service-based; gender and ethno-specific; and gender-specific, emergent.

In rural communities, immigrant, refugee and visible minority women may be collapsed into the category of "Non-First Nations" women, as opposed to "First Nations" women. Local conditions may shape how anti-racism and multiculturalism programs are conceptualized.

Empowerment/Disempowerment of Racialised Women

Issues around empowerment of racialised women were raised by respondents. Empowerment of racialised women was viewed as a desirable outcome at the individual, group and organizational levels. Strategies and barriers toward empowerment were identified in the design and implementation of programs and projects.

Working Conditions and Racialised Women Workers

Respondents who were racialised women workers in the immigrant settlement sector generally expressed dissatisfaction with their work experiences. Among the factors identified were:

- Occupational segregation, funding structure and inadequate wages and benefits;
- Volunteerism—an over reliance on volunteers to deliver core services;
- Streaming—programs that stream immigrant women into low-paid, part-time work within the sector;
- Lack of voice and representation—immigrant women front-line workers are not represented in decision-making positions in their own agencies and in the workers' association; and,
- High rates of isolation, burnout, staff turnover, conflicted feelings of loyalty and frustration.

An Anti-Racism Gender Framework and Analysis

Issues around race and gender played an important role in structuring organisational dynamics, relations among members and staff, and program outcomes in women's organisations. Just as in immigrant settlement and integration agencies, an intersectional race/gender framework and analysis is needed to acknowledge and address systemic inequality resulting from racism, sexism and homophobia. The lack of a framework to enable a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-lingual organisation to understand different women's commonality in social positioning often leads to divisions within the organisation.

MRMI Funding Policies

Respondents were very positive about MRMI staff's commitment to consultation as well as their flexibility in working with community groups. However, problems concerning the overall funding context in the settlement services sector were identified. These included: the lack of multi-year funding cycles, patchwork funding and chronic underfunding. Many respondents commented on the fact that racialised women's needs were no one government ministry's core program area and consequently many needs are going unmet.

Respondents also commented on the current funding context of devolution, cutbacks, privatization and intensification. These forces have specific implications for racialised women. In the present climate of limited resources there is as yet no way of,

- measuring the loss of services to women as a priority target group;
- ensuring that programs and projects targeted to women will continue to be forwarded for funding and considered a priority when agencies are forced to cut programs in order to balance budgets; and,
- systematically supporting innovative community development programs aimed at ethno-specific women in their communities, since articulation of "needs" and "services" are usually not specified in advance, but emerge out of the process of community development.

Selected Issues

Respondents identified several important issues that require attention:

1. **A conservative family ideology prevails in the sector**. Most MRMI funded programs for immigrant women are directed to immigrant and refugee women in their domestic roles in the family, as mothers, wives and daughters. There are few programs aimed at immigrant and refugee women in their other social roles, such as workers, citizens, consumers, professionals, investors, entrepreneurs and activists. There are limited programs to support racialised women beyond the initial stage of integration. MRMI funded programs for women are difficult to identify because they masquerade under other labels, such as, "family support", "parenting" or seniors programs.

2. **As a priority target population for government policy, "immigrant, refugee and visible minority" women require more attention and research—a "one size fits all" approach leaves many women unserved.** There is a danger that existing programs reinforce an erroneous stereotype of immigrant women as needy, dependent and burdened by children; oppressed by males through traditional cultural practices; passive and non-English speaking. Racialised immigrant women are erroneously constituted as a natural, pre-existing, homogenous constituency, with similar needs and issues. Racialised women's needs are over simplified and often not viewed holistically by agencies or by government.

3. **The immigration and multiculturalism sector is racialised and feminised**. Work in this sector is made possible through the labour of racialised immigrant women who feel torn between a commitment to their communities and feelings of exploitation. The sector relies on and institutionalizes "volunteerism" through programs designed to assist immigrant women to identify and take "the next step" to integration. Often, the only options available are volunteer work in community-based immigrant serving and partner agencies. Existing immigrant support programs offer a limited range of options that help to "stream" immigrant women into volunteer and low paid work within the sector.

4. **Most front-line workers are racialised women who work part-time for low wages and few benefits**. They experience truncated and restricted occupational movement. Immigrant women workers are not reflected in the management of immigrant and multicultural agencies. There is a racial and gendered hierarchy in occupational structure, wages and benefits in the sector that must be addressed. Formal equity policies need to be monitored more rigorously and agencies need to be held accountable for meeting equity and affirmative action targets.

5. **The sector is chronically underfunded**. Related to the issue of employment equity is chronic underfunding and the structure of government funding programs in the sector. Government funding generally provides short-term and project specific grants. Chronic underfunding results in a high rate of staff turnover; contradictory outcomes in service provision and programs; high stress levels among staff; competition for limited funding; and inconsistent services to immigrants across the province. One overall impact of this situation may be the limitation of new immigrants' residential choices to the Lower Mainland where they are able to access a broad range of integration services (90% of new immigrants to BC settle in the Vancouver area). To cope with chronic underfunding, the sector has developed mechanisms to provide basic services. Heavy reliance on dedicated, but not necessarily trained volunteers to deliver core programs such as anti-racism, diversity training, translation and interpretation, orientation and information services, family support and counseling, is one such strategy. In this system, many needs of women are not being met and women are continuing to "fall through the cracks", since racialised women's issues are "no one's core program". Existing funding programs favour large, multi-service agencies. Self-help and self-initiated civic participation initiatives by racialised women do not usually receive support. There are few resources for developing community-based, self-help, self-organized, women-centered groups, especially in rural and northern communities where large distances make it difficult to establish a sense of "community". Women's self-help voluntary associations are known to form the backbone of healthy democratic societies. The leadership of women working together at the community level to link diverse groups together in cooperative partnerships is a necessary prerequisite to the development of healthy communities. Government goals for the social cohesion and social integration of immigrants into a multicultural society cannot be fully met under the existing funding arrangement.

6. **An anti-racist gender analysis should be integrated into all aspects of the Ministry's work.** Immigration and multiculturalism policy is highly gendered in its underlying assumptions and in implementation, and this needs to be recognized and addressed. For example, international migration from Asian countries is predicted to have gendered impacts on domestic immigration in specific ways that will impact on the demand for integration services.

7. **Economic recession, globalisation, privatization, downloading and cutbacks in government services have heightened negative effects on immigrant and refugee women**. A large and growing proportion of the poor are immigrant, refugee and racialised women. The dismantling of the health and social safety net disproportionately impacts upon racialised immigrant and refugee women because they lack extended resource networks to fill the gaps. They are often employed in the lowest paid sector of the economy and have fewer resources to fall back on. Government policies sometimes exacerbate conditions of poverty for immigrants and refugees.

8. **There are few appropriate and accessible services for immigrant and refugee women beyond the immediate settlement stage and there are a limited number of programs, given the diversity of racialised women in the population**. Women's integration into Canadian society follows a different pattern than men's integration. Often the family investment strategy employed by immigrants results in immigrant and refugee women being left behind. Moreover, many highly educated, highly skilled immigrant women, like their partners, cannot find jobs commensurate with their professional qualifications. A greater range of services need to be made available and research undertaken to identify strategies to remove barriers to women's integration.

9. **Community-based development approaches may not comfortably fit within MRMI's performance measurement outcomes plan**. Community development processes cannot always predefine measurable and observable performance outcomes. Greater flexibility in program reporting and assessment may be required.

10. **In smaller rural communities, historic processes of racialisation and struggle by First Nations result in different conditions of discrimination and racism than urban centres.** Immigrant, refugee and other racialised women are inappropriately constructed and perceived as homogenously non-First Nations. Racism is often equated with the experiences of First Nations peoples and racialised immigrant, refugee and Canadian-born visible minority women's issues remain obscured in one large category of "non-First Nations," the majority of whom are "white", European, English-speaking and Canadian-born. Much more work and education needs to be undertaken to bridge these communities and to make visible the commonalities and differences.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The BC Ministry Responsible for Multiculturalism and Immigration (MRMI) desires to more effectively serve immigrant, refugee and visible minority women by better understanding the impact of projects supported through its programs. This study was commissioned to undertake a detailed analysis of selected projects (funded by MRMI) and priorities in the settlement and multiculturalism sector, in order to:

- provide information demonstrating the links between funded projects and the Ministry's mandate;
- improve the Ministry's program design, planning and decision-making;
- contribute data to MRMI's performance measurement initiative;
- show accountability for funds allocated; and,
- increase sectoral capacity to develop effective projects.

It was not the purpose of this study to evaluate individual MRMI funded projects and/or sponsoring organisations. Selected projects with particular priorities were examined as a means of collecting and analysing information to guide future MRMI policy and program decisions. Best practices and strategies employed by organisations in programming for women, and recommendations addressed to the sector are included in this report as a means to circulate secondary findings of the study that are likely to be useful to the work of participating organisations.

Methodology

The study proceeded in two phases to allow for flexibility and participant input into its goals, design and outcomes. As the original terms of reference were quite general, the decision to proceed in two stages allowed the researcher and the Ministry opportunities to clarify the study's purposes, scope and intended uses of the findings.

The major activity in Phase I included consulting with MRMI staff to design the research; develop and pilot-test research questions and themes; and select projects for inclusion in the study. Four projects, recommended by MRMI, were included in Phase I, using the following selection criteria: location (urban, suburban and rural), model of program delivery, project/program objectives and MRMI funding source. Sponsoring organisations for the Phase I projects were: Pacific Immigrant Resources Society (Vancouver), Burnaby Family Life Institute (Burnaby), North Shore Multicultural Society (North Vancouver), and Inter Cultural Association (Victoria). Phase II included six additional sponsoring agencies: Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of B.C. (Vancouver), Multicultural Family Centre (Vancouver), MOSAIC (Vancouver), Immigrant Services Society of BC (Vancouver), Abbotsford Community Services (Abbotsford) and Westcoast Women's Resource Society (Ucluelet), as well as the City of Vancouver's Community Services Funding Program.

Qualitative methods, including semi-structured on-site interviews, document analysis and focus group consultations, were used to collect and analyse data. The interview themes are listed in Appendix 3.

Interviews with thirty-seven staff members representing the ten organisations, partner organisations and municipal governments were conducted over the course of four months (January through April, 1999), as well as seven interviews with MRMI staff. Study participants were selected according to their knowledge of the sector, involvement in settlement and multicultural programming for women and proximity to the selected MRMI funded projects. Respondents were drawn from a variety of locations within organisations: Executive Directors, Program/Project Coordinators, Outreach Workers and Steering Committee Members. Social Planners and representatives from partner organisations were also interviewed during the research. To the extent possible, interviews were conducted in the field to provide the researcher with a sense of the context within which the projects were developed and services delivered.

A wide range of documents were analysed during the study, including: annual reports, project evaluation reports and literature produced by organisations to communicate their purposes and goals to the public; MRMI policy and procedures documentation; MRMI funding program documentation; and, government literature and studies relevant to the settlement and multiculturalism sector.

Study respondents were given the opportunity to review and revise their organisation's case profiles. Several respondents made revisions to their profiles. Input from study respondents was obtained on a working draft of the study's recommendations. Focus group consultations with MRMI staff and study participants were organised to present and discuss the study findings.

Limitations

The researcher was unable to visit all projects as some were not operating during the data collection phase of the study. Time constraints also limited the number of interviews that could be conducted in any given site visit. Individual participants and clients were not interviewed as part of this study.

Social Demographic Background on Immigrant, Refugee & Visible Minority Women

- Over 50% of immigrants to Canada are women.
- Not all ethno-national immigrant groups have the same gender proportion. Among immigrants from the Philippines, for example, 65% are women.
- Very few women enter Canada as refugees.
- The category of working age immigrant women from the Asia, Australasia and Pacific region is the largest single contributing category, with over 75% of all immigrant women originating from this region between 1995 and 1996.
- Most working age visible minority women enter through family and independent class categories.
- Cantonese and Mandarin are the top two mother tongue languages of immigrants to BC.
- Two-thirds of visible minority women are foreign-born or immigrants; within the Canadian population most immigrant women are also visible minorities.
- The age range among immigrant groups is lower than that of the rest of the population. Immigrant groups have more children and larger families.
- More than half of South East Asian and Latin American adults living in Canada immigrated between 1982 and 1991. Over one-third of West Asian and Arab, Chinese, Filipino, Korean and South Asian adults also arrived during this period, while this was the case for about one-quarter of Africans. In contrast, few Japanese (6%) and Pacific Islanders (15%) came to Canada during the 1980s.
- Chinese account for the largest share of visible minorities in Canada (26%), followed by South Asians and Africans (about 20%).
- Most visible minorities live in Canada's urban centres, mainly Vancouver and Toronto.

- Visible minority adults are more likely to have a university degree and less likely not have completed high school (18%), compared to 11% of non-visible minority group adults.
- Statistics Canada recognizes 11 groups as visible minorities and excludes persons of First Nations ancestry from this list.

Overview

Research literature reviewed for the study indicates the need to rethink the terms by which the target population—"immigrant, refugee and visible minority women"—is identified. The terms "racialisation", "feminisation" and "intersectionality" are introduced in the "Selected Literature Review" as key concepts for analysing the data.

At the outset of the study, MRMI expressed an interest in program/project outcomes. Respondents identified several types and levels of project outcomes which are classified in a matrix and discussed in detail in the "Outcomes" section of the report.

A list of "Best Practices and Strategies" were compiled from responses related to immigrant support programs for women. This list should be considered preliminary and used as a starting point for a future compilation of successful practices.

The study provides a number of important findings related to perceptions of the target group as well as issues around empowerment of racialised women. One major finding of the study is that respondents who were racialised women workers generally expressed dissatisfaction with their work experiences in the immigrant settlement sector. Three sections of the report, "Perceptions and Assumptions around 'Immigrant Women'", "Empowerment/Disempowerment of Racialised Women" and "Working Conditions and Feelings of Disempowerment in Racialised Women Workers in the Immigrant Settlement Sector", address these findings.

Issues around race and gender are revealed to play an important role in structuring organizational dynamics, relations among members and staff, and program outcomes in women's organisations as well as in immigrant settlement and integration agencies. The need for an intersectional approach to project/program development and implementation is identified as a priority in the sector, and is elaborated in the section titled "Integrating an Anti-racism Gender Framework and Gender Analysis".

Respondents were very positive about MRMI staff's commitment to consultation and their flexibility in working with community groups. However, problems concerning the overall funding context in the settlement services sector were identified, and are described in the section "MRMI Funding Policies".

A complete list of study recommendations is provided in the section "Conclusions and Summary of Recommendations". Appendices include a glossary of terms, profiles of the ten participating agencies and the projects examined, the themes around which the interviews were conducted, a list of study participants and a complete list of references.

SELECTED LITERATURE REVIEW

This review summarizes several bodies of literature related to the purpose of this study. It outlines broadly the major theoretical directions of the past ten years concerning women as "immigrant, refugee and visible minority".

The review casts a broad net over research which addresses the intersection of state policy and immigrant women in Canada in three main areas: 1) policy-focused research on immigrant women; 2) current literature that examines organising and service delivery models specific to immigrant women, and 3) current literature that suggests best practices (at the program level) and methods of measuring outcomes performance in immigrant settlement programs. Due to limitations of time and resources, the review excludes policy research on First Nations women's issues as they intersect with migration, anti-racism and multiculturalism. This task remains to be undertaken in future research.

Overall, there is a dearth of policy-oriented research on immigrant, refugee and visible minority women Even less research exists at the program level in areas such as best practices, in the crafting and administering of integration/multicultural funding programs, provision of services and community development and organising.[1]

Background

Beginning in the 1960s, the rise of the women's movement in Canada drew attention to systemic gender biases in government policy, and women activists began making demands on the state to address "women's issues". However, the "2nd wave" of the women's movement tended to raise issues that were of concern to white, middle-class women, such as pay and employment equity, marital laws and sexual harassment. It was not until the late 1970s and 1980s in Canada that the voices of visible minority and immigrant women began to be heard on the national stage, and policy research began to be focused on their needs. Around this time, the voices of organised Aboriginal women also began to be heard. There were several factors contributing to greater awareness of minority women's issues and state policy in addition to the rise in women's collective consciousness and activism. Also important were changing migration patterns that brought increasing numbers of women from developing nations to Canada at a time when Canada's identity and status as an Anglo-Franco founded nation was being challenged internally, through Quebec and First Nations nationalisms; the problems of a declining population and the associated demand for low-cost labour; and the dynamics of globalisation and economic restructuring. These factors, among others, heightened existing discriminatory practices against non-white, non-European women.

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[1] Status of Women Canada's *Gendering Immigration/Integration: Policy Research Workshop Proceedings and A Selective Review of Policy Research Literature 1987-1996* provides a general overview of the past decade of research in the area of immigrant women and policy and identifies specific research gaps. For the purposes of this project, however, emphasis has been placed on finding and reviewing literature that provides direction for project and service development and enhancement as well as suggesting best practices for organisations and ministerial programs working with immigrant women.

Areas of concern to immigrant, refugee and visible minority women include issues around discriminatory immigration policy, lack of English language training, lack of recognition of foreign credentials and professional certification, job ghettoisation and exploitation, racism and sexism, lack of job training opportunities, domestic and social violence, lack of culturally suitable health care, education and social services, and lack of opportunities for political and civic engagement. Immigrant, refugee and visible minority women have organized their own advocacy organisations to raise their concerns in the women's movement and in the larger political arena. Non-profit, voluntary, community-based immigrant women's organisations developed to offer services to fill the gaps in mainstream social services as well as regular immigrant services. Governments at all levels are now being called upon to address social inequality faced by racialised women (Agnew, 1996; Ng, 1996; das Gupta, 1994; Bakan & Stasiulis, 1997).

Rethinking the Terms

Of central importance to policy research is describing and delimiting the target population and one of the crucial shifts in recent research and theoretical debates relates to the unproblematic use of the terms "immigrant" and "visible minority". Although often used as "objective" categories for statistical and survey research as well as government policy administration, Ng (1996) points out in her study of a Toronto-based employment agency, that,

> ...technically, the term, 'immigrant women,' refers to women who are landed immigrants in Canada. In everyday life, however, women who are white, educated, and English-speaking are rarely considered to be immigrant women. The term conjures up the image of a woman who does not speak English or who speaks English with an accent; who is from the Third World or a member of a visible minority group; and who has a certain type of job (e.g., a sewing machine operator or a cleaning lady).

Ng argues that the work of service providers, program and policy developers is invariably involved in the social construction of immigrant women and that the Immigration Act and immigration policy, to a large extent, determine the position of immigrant women in Canadian society, and further, that community organisations' and agencies' effectiveness is often curtailed by the funding priorities and reporting requirements of state sponsors. Researchers have demonstrated how the terms used to describe non-white Canadian women operate as discursive mechanisms of regulation, control and subordination (Bannerji, 1993; Ng, 1993). These terms are often used as though they are positive, objective or neutral, but they are in fact embedded in and help to reproduce Eurocentric, masculinist and racist thinking about non-white, non-Western women.

Alternative perspectives

Moving away from idealized accounts of the universal woman of the 1970s, theorists and activists recognized differences among women based on sexual identities, race, class, ethnicity, abilities and so on, and the focus shifted to understanding differences and inequality among women as well as in relation to men. During this period, the mantra "race, gender and class" became commonplace. A "politics of difference" resulted in a politics that placed racism over sexism as fundamental to understanding immigrant and visible minority women's marginalisation and oppression. In the field of practice as well as academic discourse, these ideas translated into a "hierarchy of oppression" as the basis for feminist politics and action. American and British uses of the term "Blackness", springing from their own histories, influenced Canadian feminist thinking and practice where "blackness" was opposed to "whiteness" and seen as equivalent to racism, rendering all other peoples' experiences irrelevant. The same dynamic occurred in some areas in Canada where racism was equated to Aboriginal status. Race thinking, or race essentialism (as this way of thinking has been called), created its own exclusions, just as gender essentialism had earlier (Jhappan, 1996).

For example, Nahla Abdo (1993), an Arab-Palestinian-Canadian, questioned the way feminist organizations employed a racial hierarchy based on skin colour to establish priorities for political action which excluded women who did not fit a "racial' profile, such as women from the Middle East, light skinned Asians, Latin Americans and mixed-blood women including Métis, Natives, Mestizas and others. She noted that due to the historical struggles of Aboriginal women in Canada, official policies, media and even equality-seeking groups enacted a racial hierarchy that identified Native Canadians as the "most" affected by racism, with "Blacks" in second place, and an unspecific category of "people/women of colour" in last. In Canada, hierarchical race/ethnic consciousness has been reflected and reproduced through multiculturalism, as official policy, with programs that, until recently, were mainly directed towards those who were not Anglo, Franco or Native.

In women's political mobilization against racism and sexism during the 1980s and 1990s, women's testimonies and experiences revealed traps, pitfalls and dangerous undercurrents operating within organisations that attempted to represent racialised women's voices (Carty, 1993; Lee, 1995). These conflicts are not due to racialised women's lack of skill or inability to organize, as some suggest. Rather, minority women researchers identified the degree to which the memberships, mandates and political objectives of state funded immigrant and visible minority women's organisations had been fully mediated by the state (Carty & Brand, 1993; Findlay, 1993; St. Lewis, 1997; Turpel-Lafond, 1997). In one critical conference where the national women's organization representing immigrant and visible minority women was organized, the state refused to admit women from Latin America, defining them as outside of the category "visible minority" (Carty & Brand, 1993). Lighter skin women from the Middle East and Latin America have been told that they are not included, and mixed-blood women have been told that they do not have the same claim as "really oppressed" women based on skin colour. With the change in immigration patterns from Europe to Asia, Africa, the Middle East and the Caribbean, two-thirds of visible minority women are also immigrant women. "Immigrant women" have become synonymous with women from the Third World. Visible minority women, that is women marked by skin colour, are both immigrant women and native-born women, but the term is now often used to distinguish racialised native-born women from "immigrant and refugee" foreign-born women. In practice, however, most "visible minority women" are perceived as "immigrant women."

Rather than taking these categories as "natural" and homogenous, researchers have begun to see them as the consequences of historical and cultural processes of **racialisation**. The term, "racialisation" moves away from a view of women as belonging to "races", since there is no scientific evidence to support the biological classification of human beings into "races" based on phenotypic characteristics such as skin colour, hair texture, size and shape of body or other features. The term "racialisation" draws attention to the way that people are classified as different and then treated as subordinate. It does not take "race" as real. Yet the term "race" continues to be used as a meaningful way to describe differences among people. Race consciousness is something that is socially constructed and the term, "racialisation", has been coined to describe cultural processes of signifying and valuing "racial" differences among peoples. Within this conceptual framework, racism becomes the focus of research, not race relations, that is relations among and across "races" (Miles, 1989; Henry, et al, 1995).

Racialisation is, in some ways, parallel to the way we have come to think about the social construction of gender. Masculinity and femininity as sexual traits are no longer taken for granted as fixed, but are recognized as being socially produced and valued differently. Similarly, the once oppositional categories of female and male are now recognized as excluding those who fall at points along a continuum of genders. **Feminisation** is a term that has been developed to refer to social processes that designate and undervalue activities, services and goods as "feminine", female or women's work.

Reconceptualising the social construction of race and gender has allowed for **intersectionality** as the best way of understanding the experiences of racialised women, including immigrant, refugee, visible minority and First Nations women. Ng, Bannerji and others argue that it is necessary to comprehend the complex interaction of race, gender, class, language, sexuality and ability and other structures of inequality in positioning and shaping women's lived experiences in Canada. They argue against additive analyses that sometimes place gender, sometimes class, and sometimes race and ethnicity, as primary, then adding on other inequalities. Feminist researchers argue that racialised women's lives cannot be understood by looking at each dimension separately. Analyses and action must begin by examining women's lived experiences, then move outwards to connect with larger structural forces. Linking macro-level trends to the everyday worlds of racialised women through the use of qualitative and quantitative research, facilitates the transition from empirical research to policy development (Status of Women Canada, 1998).

At the levels of program and policy, the literature suggests that in addressing the needs of immigrant women, policy makers and program planners should first foster the establishment of "community", by opening the spaces for self-representing groups of immigrant, refugee and visible minority women to identify the barriers they face and the needs they would like to see addressed, thus inverting the traditional top-down approach to programming (Agnew, 1996). When "needs" are predefined and assumed as the basis for program design, previous assumptions, beliefs and values about racialised women are transmitted through existing policies and procedures, thereby undermining the opportunity to empower racialised women. In addition, an assumption that a "community" of immigrant, refugee and/or visible minority women exists as objective reality "out there", only serves to obscure and keep hidden the diversity among racialised women.

Policy Research Related to Immigrant and Refugee Women

Current studies aimed at unravelling the myriad barriers to integration faced by immigrant women describe the combined effects of economic, labour, immigration, bilingual and multicultural policies and juridical processes on the socio-economic status, health and well-being of immigrant women. In general, these studies argue that where policy does not address the realities of immigrant women, or where immigrant women are subsumed under the generic categories of either "immigrant" or "women," that the policies themselves pose barriers to both integration and access to services, as well as rendering immigrant women vulnerable to violence and discrimination. In addition, many of the best practices for services/organisations and program developers/funders (described later in this review) appear to be aimed at mitigating disempowering policies that exacerbate social closure mechanisms to contain many immigrant women within a particularly low socio-economic stratum.

Policy literature reviewed here can best be categorised within three "interactions": that between economic, labour and immigration policies; between bilingual, multicultural and education policies; and, between multicultural and citizenship policies. Below is a summary and synthesis of both the policy analyses and the policy recommendations offered in the literature, which may inform a consideration of best practices and outcomes performance at all levels (project, organising, service delivery and programs).

Gender and Economic, Labour and Immigration Policies

Gender and Immigration Policies

Researchers have identified gender, race and class assumptions underlying Canada's immigration laws. They have shown that the composition of the Canadian population is greatly influenced by immigration and citizenship laws that screen who gets in, and once here, who can access the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. In the past, male immigrants have been preferred over female immigrants, except where women were needed to fill certain labour needs (Boyd, 1990).

Immigrant women most often enter Canada under the family class visa category or the live-in caregiver program, as opposed to entering as independents or refugees per se. Sponsored immigrants are ineligible for social services such as income assistance, and social welfare programs such as legal aid and publicly subsidized housing (Seward, 1988). Although Canada has recently included gender as a criteria for determining refugee status, women make up 80 pe rcent of the world's refugees while only 27 pe rcent of the refugees arriving in Canada between 1979 and 1994 were women, suggesting that gender as a criteria for determining refugee status has not fully been interpreted into immigration practices (Foster, 1991).

Gender dynamics of migration are also affected by international processes of globalisation and regionalisation, and domestic push/pull factors (Michaelowski, 1996). Immigration from the Philippines is one clear example, where 65% of Filipino immigrants are women who primarily enter through the domestic live-in caregiver program. Philippine domestic policies encourage Philippine women to migrate, and the Philippine government has established trade agreements with receiving governments to facilitate the export of female labour. The Canadian government has also historically recruited women with certain skills, such as female teachers and nurses from Great Britain and domestic workers from the Caribbean, but it has also excluded particular women, for example, the Chinese Head Tax and Exclusion Act that prevented Chinese wives from joining their husbands (Ng, 1993; Calliste, 1989; Li, 1988).

The feminisation of international migration policies is most pronounced in the Asian case. Asian women are increasingly moving in their own right as economic migrants into gender segregated labour markets (Lim & Oishi, 1996). Asian female migration to Canada in the 1990s demonstrates important differences from female immigration in general, and highlights the significance of regional political conditions (push factors) and sending countries' policies (facilitation factors) as crucial determinants of migration to Canada and elsewhere. Major Asian source countries of female immigrants (Hong Kong, Philippines, India, China, Sri Lanka Taiwan, Lebanon and Iran) to Canada are unequally represented in three Canadian admission classes, with a share twice as high in the independent class. It is predicted that, by the end of this century, the share of independent immigrants to Canada will increase from 42 per cent to 53 per cent, and will eventually outsize family class immigration (44%) (Michaelowski, 1996). Given the dynamic and growing labour migration from the Asian region, Canada (and particularly British Columbia), could be in store for a dramatic reshaping of immigration flows that will affect demands on integration services. These trends should provide an impetus to developing gender sensitive labour and social integration and settlement policies that are linked to changing trends for female immigration. As racialised women and as migrants, female immigrants are particularly susceptible to various forms of discrimination, exploitation and abuse (Lim & Oishi, 1996).

Women in general find it difficult at present to enter Canada as independent immigrants. They come in their status as wives, mothers and daughters. The family class visa category and the live-in caregiver program are examples of how the dependent status of women is reinforced. These programs leave women vulnerable to the whims of their sponsors/employers, exacerbating fears of deportation and diminishing the possibilities of accessing language and skills training, and professional development programs (Foster, 1998; Belfiore et. al., 1985; Boyd, 1987; Estable, 1986). In addition, both avenues of entry are examples of the difficulty that the state has had over the years in "synthesizing the humanity of immigration with the economics of immigration" (Foster, 1991). The reduced safety net and fewer social services available to sponsored and temporary immigrants, combined with the fact that these categories are female-dominated, effectively results in the withholding of services from the majority of immigrant women, who, by virtue of their visa category, are not consider to be bound for the marketplace and thus are ineligible for the master key to successful integration provided by government—full-time language and skills training (Foster, 1998; Boyd, 1987; Estable, 1986).

Employment

Much of the research examines immigrant women's location in the paid labour market. Regardless of the method of entry into Canada, a majority of immigrant women do work for wages, and tend to be bimodally situated within the highest and lowest strata of the labour market (Ng, 1996). Non-white, non-English-speaking women tend to be clustered in three occupational categories characterized by low salaries, part-time, term-specific or temporary employment, low levels of unionization and few employee benefits. Saraswati

(1996) found that poverty rates for racialised women are much higher than poverty rates for the nation as a whole.

Employment equity initiatives of various governments, crown corporations and other agencies have not increased representation of immigrant women in these worksites, as these initiatives tend to result in the hiring and advancement of white women and visible minority men (Boyd, 1992). Despite evidence of their high labour market participation rates, immigrant, refugee and visible minority women are still perceived as non-productive housewives who do not contribute to the economy (see Canadian Women Studies, Spring, 1998, passim).

Immigrant women's advancement into "equity promoting" worksites, such as the civil service, health, education, technology and financial services, is undermined at least in part by subjective and inaccurate methods of credential evaluation, which range from a "sharp de-valuing of foreign credentials," to inaccurate translation/interpretation of foreign documents, requirements for original certificates/transcripts which sometimes cannot be met (by, for example, refugees), and a general difficulty of establishing equivalency of credentials (Seward, 1988; Sorenson 1995). Notable also is the connection between employment equity initiatives and the live-in caregiver program. Foreign domestic workers are often as highly educated as their Canadian employers; however, the lack of a commitment to universal child care and the refusal to grant immediate landed status to foreign domestic workers (most of whom enter the Live-in Caregiver Program with a view to applying for landed status upon completion of the 24 month work requirement) situate highly educated immigrant women and Canadian women on two distinctly separate stratum in the workforce (Daenzer, 1993).

Lengthy re-training periods and/or problems with gaining accreditation, the need for income immediately upon arrival, a family investment strategy, deskilling that occurs when the Live-in Caregiver Program is used as a method of entry into Canada, and the difficulty of making one's way into a foreign job market all have been identified as causing a lag time for immigrant women in finding work that matches their qualifications. In addition to these hinderances are the structural barriers in the labour market, such as racism, sexism, linguicism and ethnocentrism (Seward, 1988; Basavarajappa et. al., 1990; Foster, 1998; Boyd, 1987; Estable, 1986).

Effective monitoring of progress made under employment equity initiatives and the disaggregation of immigrant women from the categories of "woman" and "immigrant" in data collection were recommended to track and increase the movement of immigrant women into "equity promoting" workplaces (Boyd, 1992). In addition, entry processes into professional jobs would be improved by adopting a method of assessing academic and other qualifications that is objective and blind to gender, race and ethnicity (Seward, 1988; Sorenson, 1995). Thus there are two separate and distinct areas of concern for labour policies, one which deals with the lack of recognition of foreign acquired credentials and their value in the labour market, and the other being the streaming of women into low-paid, low-skilled service and factory labour where immigrant women are subjected to exploitation and abuse. At present, these issues fall into a policy gap since they are viewed as neither employment and training issues nor educational matters. More research and policy attention needs to be paid to working conditions of racialised women.

The need for professional development programs for immigrant women working outside professional and "equity promoting" workplaces was also identified to overcome the deskilling, lack of advancement opportunities experienced by immigrant women in service and processing sectors, as well as the low profit earnings of entrepreneurial businesses owned and operated by immigrant women (Boyd, 1992; Seward, 1988; Anslem, 1994).

Bilingual, Multicultural and Education policies

Although 1991 Statistics Canada figures reveal that 94 per cent of immigrants in Canada could carry on a conversation in one or both languages (Miedema & Waccholz, 1998, 29), nevertheless, obstacles facing immigrant women in all aspects of Canadian society are frequently attributed to the 'language barrier' (Miedema & Waccholz, 1998; Scassa, 1994; Seward, 1988; Boyd, 1992, 1987; Basavarajappa et. al., 1990; Foster, 1998; Estable, 1986; IVMWAA, 1991). As Scassa (1994) shows in her analysis of bilingualism, multiculturalism and national human rights discourse and cases,

> ...language use may serve as a trigger for a range of negative attitudes and stereotypes about non-dominant groups which have more to do with racism than language ability. However, a member of a visible minority who speaks perfect standard English may be more favourably regarded by the dominant group than one who speaks with an accent. (Scassa, 1994).

Studies have shown that community, municipal and provincial commitments to language training vary greatly (Seward, 1988), leaving immigrant women in some parts of the country, especially rural areas, with little or no access to language training. In addition, community colleges and community-based organisations are continuously in competition for language and skills training dollars, and whereas the focus of college ESL training tends to be on language proficiency, the focus of community-based training tends to be on relevancy to the needs and lives of training participants (Das Gupta, 1986). With so many groups involved, each with their own philosophy and agenda, official language training in Canada is anything but systematic and accessible by the majority of immigrant women. In addition to administrative disarray, there are the obvious time, financial and logistical constraints undermining women's access to language training, making it possible to reverse the onus of the 'language barrier' from immigrant women to the state.

Problems in the delivery of services to immigrant women are often attributed to cultural differences or language barriers. Such conclusions are belied by extensive evidence of systemic barriers preventing immigrant women from accessing legal, social and health services (Das Gupta, 1986).

Immigrant women who are sponsored are particularly vulnerable to sustained domestic violence due to the institutionalisation of their dependency on sponsors, most of whom are their husbands (Miedema & Waccholz, 1998; Currie, 1995; IVWAA, 1991). Many factors have been identified as compounding this dependency, including: a lack of information about legal rights and services available to victims of assault; distrust of police; fear of deportation; fear of separation from their children; financial dependence and lack of access to income assistance; lack of subsidised child care; lack of affordable housing; lack of access to mental health services; the 'language barrier' and difficulty in accessing language training; limited access to legal aid; a dearth of services especially in rural areas as well as poorly trained staff at shelters (Miedema & Waccholz, 1998; Currie, 1995; IVWAA, 1991). Miedema and Waccholz (1998) found that even when immigrant women spoke English, their stories were often misunderstood or dismissed by service providers, police and prosecutors who could not understand or exhibited biases against women who spoke with accents.

Policy, program and service delivery recommendations aimed at promoting equitable access to the criminal justice system and social assistance for immigrant women include: cultural sensitivity and immigration procedures training for those who work in justice-related services and the hiring of staff from diverse cultural backgrounds; increased funding for legal aid; creation of support services for immigrant families in conflict; on-going provision of information to immigrant women about legal rights and available services in their communities; increased collaboration between immigrant/refugee centres, shelters, police and justice officials; guaranteed automatic landed status to women who have been assaulted by their spouses; fully funded language training for sponsored immigrants; subsidized child care; on-going outreach by health service providers, police and women's shelters; and mental health programs with a feminist and cross-cultural approach (Miedema & Waccholz, 1998; Currie, 1995; IVWAA, 1991).

Gender, Multicultural and Citizenship Policies

Multicultural policies have been, and continue to be, a terrain of struggle for racialised women. Researchers have identified gender bias and sexism embedded in the ideology, policies and programs of official multicultural policies (Lee & Cardinal, 1998; das Gupta, 1994; Gabriel, 1996). Official multiculturalism, at all levels of government, relies on community groups to implement the policy with support through community grants. Volunteerism, as in other sectors, is a form of devolution and privatization that has gendered consequences. When the transmission of ethnic culture, managed through official multicultural policies, is relegated to the "private" sphere of family and community, it becomes the work of volunteers who are mainly women. Women, as low-paid community workers and as volunteers, provide the labour to undertake the mandated multicultural projects.

Multiculturalism discourses are gendered in several ways. Although the immigrant services, multicultural and anti-racism sector is feminised—as non-productive and of low value—national debates over multiculturalism in formal politics and popular media is masculinised, dominated by men, and perceived as being of high value to the state. The gendering of multicultural discourses is related to dominant perceptions of national identity and citizenship. There is growing interest in researching the relationships among multiculturalism, gender, racism, nationalism and citizenship and their relationship to the formation and implementation of government policies (Lee & Cardinal, 1998; Ng, 1993; Bannerji, 1993).

Community and Social Integration

Research generally confirms what immigrant settlement workers already know from their community work about the social isolation of immigrant and refugee women. Lack of social networks, language barriers and the absence of affordable and quality child care have been identified as significant contributing factors. On the other hand, researchers have also noted that women may have more freedom, in the absence of their networks, and may become more independent to divorce from an unhappy relationship and gain more reproductive control.

Boyd (1989, 1991) highlights several disturbing trends for immigrant women as they age. They experience limited access to employment and work in unstable, low-waged jobs with few pension benefits. Immigrant women are particularly susceptible to poverty in their later years (Meitel & Peressini, 1993). This is an issue that policy makers need to address.

There is relatively little research undertaken in the area of health and well-being of immigrant women. Some work, as noted in the Status of Women Canada's (1997) overview of research, has been done regarding mental health, torture, the need for cultural sensitivity and cultural practices of immigrant women. However, there is an urgent need to broaden this area of research and to promote advocacy for better health services. In particular the health needs and experiences of refugee women have not yet been fully explored.

Immigrant Services

Community-based organisations delivering services to immigrants and refugees are financially vulnerable. Baker (1995) reports that a lack of operational funds and heavy reliance on volunteer workers places an enormous burden on staff. Projects and service delivery enhancements initiated in the absence of adequate funding lead to high rates of staff 'burnout,' volunteer turnover and project/service delivery 'meltdown'. The ideal funding scenario is for new community organisations to receive at least five years of core funding (Baker, 1995).

The requirements and priorities of funders also need to be scrutinised, as funding criteria have been identified as controlling projects and service delivery in many, sometimes detrimental, ways (Ng, 1996; Das Gupta, 1986). Through her examination of the history of an employment agency for immigrant women in Toronto, Ng concludes that funding requirements imposed certain changes on the agency's operation, penetrating the "...internal operation of the agency". She notes that this did not occur only "through a direct imposition of directives on its mode of operation":

> More profoundly, as the employment agency expanded and its functions grew in complexity, a set of new accounting procedures (of clients, of employers, of services provided, etc.) also became the internal requirement of the agency itself...In the course of its development, the perspective of the agency shifted from one which attended to the lived experiences of the clients to the perspective of an impersonal institutional order. (Ng, 1996)

Funding criteria also "define which group of immigrant women should be targeted by such programs or which group is 'disadvantaged,' or officials scrutinize trainees to make sure that they fit the definitions" (Das Gupta, 1986). Further, the aims of a particular project or service delivery enhancement may be to increase the self-esteem or facilitate the empowerment of women, and reporting requirements of funders may not capture the benefits accruing to members/clients because the measures are based, for example, on number of placements or other quantitative information (Das Gupta, 1986).

Recent research on the effects of fiscal policies of the state on settlement services has found that devolution, restructuring and privatization affect all aspects of the delivery of human services, and the funding environment for immigrant settlement services is changing rapidly. In Ontario, the provincial government has devolved major funding and responsibility for immigrant settlement to local governments and organizations. The federal government has recently transferred responsibility for immigrant settlement and integration to the provinces, thereby injecting more funds and devolving control over settlement programs (MRMI, 1999). In Toronto and in Vancouver, the two major destinations for immigrants to Canada, there is now a very diverse constellation of service providers ranging from small ethnospecific organizations to large multi-ethnic, multi-service organisations, in addition to branches of mainstream organisations like hospitals and schools. This vast array of organisations has made coordination difficult, and sensitive to different communities' ability to lobby for and organize their own service structures (Owen, 1998). Principles of equality of access to social welfare, health, and education is difficult to ensure in this environment. Owen (1998) has suggested that one response to the rapidly changing policy environment has been new configurations such as greater collaborations, partnerships, coalitions and task forces. These new forms of collaboration cut across traditional divisions and make possible the provision of services that would otherwise be unavailable. More research is needed on these types of responses as they impact on racialised women who tend not to have their voices heard or do not have community organisations to represent them in coalitions and strategic partnerships.

Best Practices and Outcomes Performance Measurement

Very little literature which directly addresses best practices for multicultural programming and performance measurement of program outcomes *vis-á-vis* impacts on immigrant women was uncovered during the research for this review.

On-going Collection of Community Demographic Information

In a descriptive report on the history and function of a health services project for immigrant women in Hamilton, Fowler (1998) identifies a need for on-going collection of community demographic information to assist service providers "in planning for language services, outreach activities and staff recruitment". Collection of such information requires the development of an appropriate methodology and criteria as well as the purchase of equipment and expertise. Obviously, many organisations whose work would benefit greatly from such information may not have sufficient funds to undertake the necessary data collection, so a collaboratively designed but centrally coordinated collection process may benefit a broad range of organisational activities, and provide a clearer picture of who "immigrant women" are in various geographical locations, such that programming can be developed which focuses on the various needs identified in different communities.

On-going Community Consultation Processes

Facilitating "associative activity" (i.e., the voluntary coming together of people on the basis of a shared understanding of needs) of marginalised or undervalued groups of people in society has been identified, in community development literature, as a crucial element in strengthening democratic society (Stalwick 1997). Such consultations would bridge the gap between "communities of resistance" (Das Gupta, 1994) and program developers by facilitating the injection, into multicultural programming, of self-identified

M121

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needs and barriers to accessing mainstream institutions and services by self-representing groups of immigrant women. Lee (1995) has documented some of the difficulties encountered when applying traditional community development theories and methods to multi-lingual, multi-ethnic women's voluntary organisations. Orthodox organizational development theories need to be carefully assessed for their relevance to the development of multi-ethnic women's organisations, since much of this research is based on male dominated, mono-cultural organisational models. Expecting multicultural women's organisations to follow the stages and processes identified for mainstream groups may do more harm than good. More research is needed that is grounded in the actual experiences of organising within immigrant and refugee women's groups.

Multicultural and immigrant integration programs are faced with the task of evaluating and identifying models for service delivery and community organising and development for, with, and by immigrant women. Due to the lack of available studies of immigrant women's program-level concerns, this review relies heavily on a document developed out of a community forum for immigrant women in Ontario, *Learning From Our History,* which examines eleven community-based projects managed by and with immigrant women (Das Gupta, 1986). The major recommendations and conclusions from the study, supplemented by conclusions drawn by other research, are listed below.

Aims of Projects and Services

1. The objectives or goals of a project or service should respond to the realities of the local community in which the organisation is based, as opposed to "abstract issues" or those that affect groups of people mainly situated elsewhere.
2. Projects and service delivery models should be described and shaped by members and clients as opposed to following a top-down approach whereby boards, coordinators and funders define the "needs" of "target groups" and develop projects to meet those perceived needs. Close consultation with self-representing groups of immigrant women in model development stages is essential to sustainable performance of outcomes. Attention should be paid to participation of members/clients in developing methodologies and models appropriate to the contexts of their lives.
3. Emphasis of projects/services should be on removing barriers that racialised women confront when attempting to access established services as well as fostering the empowerment of immigrant women in the integration process.

Planning of Projects and Service Delivery Enhancements

1. Detailed attention should be paid to logistical accessibility for members/clients, to create a comfortable environment and a welcoming atmosphere.
2. Outreach and networking should be an on-going component of all projects/services.
3. Up-to-date referral lists and contacts should be maintained and be readily available, as one of the largest needs identified by immigrant women at the community forum was accurate information about available services and assistance.

4. Ideological approach and actual components/contents of the project/service must be made transparent to the members/clients.

5. Attention must be given to defining "immigrant women" and clearly differentiating between the myriad groups under the aegis of this label. Programs aimed at "immigrant women" should not assume that all immigrant women are equally "disadvantaged" or are confronted by identical barriers (Das Gupta, 1986; Ng, 1996; Estable, 1983). All projects/services should take into account the existing and varying skill levels, socio-economic status, immigration status, marital status, age, nationality and level of official language fluency of participants.

6. Links should be created with "people in municipal decision-making positions in order to overcome formal rules and regulations which can become real obstacles in program implementation" (Das Gupta, 1986).

7. Significant attention should be paid to on-going training for staff; however, staff-in-training should have limited access to clients as Miedema's study has indicated that training programs for service providers left women in government sponsored programs feeling "experimented upon" (Miedema, 1998). The use of trained peers in service delivery has been cited as being particularly successful (Fowler, 1998).

8. Anti-racism, anti-discrimination and advocacy components in all types of service delivery, community development and community organising is necessary to avoid the individualisation and internalisation of integration problems faced by immigrant women (Moreno et. al., 1990).

Organisational Considerations

1. Organisations imperatives and visions, as well as specific project/programs goals and objectives should be fully understood and acceptable to staff and volunteers and processes should be set in place for periodic and participative "revisioning," to ensure relevance is maintained and changing community profiles are addressed.

2. Democratic decision-making processes should be developed such that all parties involved may work toward consensus on major decisions affecting the project/service.

3. Boards and staff should have adequate representation from the membership/client group.

Autonomy and Integration

1. Where a community development organisation has initiated an income generating enterprise, the organisation and enterprise should be separated legally, economically and staff-wise.

2. Relative autonomy from funders is necessary in order to ensure that projects/services are driven by the needs of immigrant women as opposed to the interests of the state or the agendas of other funders.

3. Integrating a variety of projects and services on-site increases the coherence and accessibility for members/clients, assists in the establishment of on-going partnerships and collaboration between community organisations and 'mainstream' service providers, and shared knowledge and expertise (Fowler, 1998).

Development of Indicators

Social justice organisations have recently called for the development of alternative indicators to measure outcomes performance and provide benchmarks for monitoring changes. They argue that social indicators are necessary to enhance and direct a wide variety of social service, social justice, policy and program related activities (Ecumenical needs and barriers to accessing mainstream institutions and services by self-representing groups of immigrant women. Lee (1995) has documented some of the difficulties encountered when applying traditional community development theories and methods to multi-lingual, multi-ethnic women's voluntary organisations. Orthodox organizational development theories need to be carefully assessed for their relevance to the development of multi-ethnic women's organisations, since much of this research is based on male dominated, mono-cultural organisational models. Expecting multicultural women's organisations to follow the stages and processes identified for mainstream groups may do more harm than good. More research is needed that is grounded in the actual experiences of organising within immigrant and refugee women's groups.

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3. Up-to-date referral lists and contacts should be maintained and be readily available, as one of the largest needs identified by immigrant women at the community forum was accurate information about available services and assistance.

4. Ideological approach and actual components/contents of the project/service must be made transparent to the members/clients.

5. Attention must be given to defining "immigrant women" and clearly differentiating between the myriad groups under the aegis of this label. Programs aimed at "immigrant women" should not assume that all immigrant women are equally "disadvantaged" or are confronted by identical barriers (Das Gupta, 1986; Ng, 1996; Estable, 1983). All projects/services should take into account the existing and varying skill levels, socio-economic status, immigration status, marital status, age, nationality and level of official language fluency of participants.

6. Links should be created with "people in municipal decision-making positions in order to overcome formal rules and regulations which can become real obstacles in program implementation" (Das Gupta, 1986).

7. Significant attention should be paid to on-going training for staff; however, staff-in-training should have limited access to clients as Miedema's study has indicated that training programs for service providers left women in government sponsored programs feeling "experimented upon" (Miedema, 1998). The use of trained peers in service delivery has been cited as being particularly successful (Fowler, 1998).

8. Anti-racism, anti-discrimination and advocacy components in all types of service delivery, community development and community organising is necessary to avoid the individualisation and internalisation of integration problems faced by immigrant women (Moreno et. al., 1990).

Organisational Considerations

1. Organisations imperatives and visions, as well as specific project/programs goals and objectives should be fully understood and acceptable to staff and volunteers and processes should be set in place for periodic and participative "revisioning," to ensure relevance is maintained and changing community profiles are addressed.

2. Democratic decision-making processes should be developed such that all parties involved may work toward consensus on major decisions affecting the project/service.

3. Boards and staff should have adequate representation from the membership/client group.

Autonomy and Integration

1. Where a community development organisation has initiated an income generating enterprise, the organisation and enterprise should be separated legally, economically and staff-wise.

2. Relative autonomy from funders is necessary in order to ensure that projects/services are driven by the needs of immigrant women as opposed to the interests of the state or the agendas of other funders.

3. Integrating a variety of projects and services on-site increases the coherence and accessibility for members/clients, assists in the establishment of on-going partnerships and collaboration between community organisations and 'mainstream' service providers, and shared knowledge and expertise (Fowler, 1998).

Development of Indicators

Social justice organisations have recently called for the development of alternative indicators to measure outcomes performance and provide benchmarks for monitoring changes. They argue that social indicators are necessary to enhance and direct a wide variety of social service, social justice, policy and program related activities (Ecumenical

Coalition, 1998; Federal-Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women, 1997; Anderson, 1991). At this point, alternative social indicators remain quantitatively based, drawing on wider sets of quantitative survey data than those that measure economic activity. Only one relevant study researching qualitative indicators in the immigrant settlement and integration sector was found (Ervin, 1994).

On behalf of the Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISA) Ervin (1994) conducted a Delphi study[2] of service providers to identify the most important outcome indicators of immigrant "adaptation" and "integration". The majority of individuals participating in the study were service providers and of this group 40 per cent were immigrants. Immigrant clients did not participate in generating the list of outcome indicators. The study did not include a gender analysis so it is not directly relevant to the present study's target population. However, the top fifteen indicators identified relate to the purposes of this study and they are listed below.

1. Ability to speak and listen in English and to be able to understand the subtleties of ordinary and slang speech.
2. Maintaining or establishing a functional harmonious family life.
3. A sense of well-being, optimism (good mental health as well as a general sense of physical well being.
4. Settlement in a safe, permanent home or apartment and acquiring satisfactory household goods
5. The willingness to accept available as well as suitable employment.
6. Capacity to make friends in the host as well as the ethnocultural community.
7. Being able to support oneself and/or one's family.
8. Being able to adjust to life and culture in Canada and to know what is acceptable and ordinary.
9. To have skills for finding and acquiring employment.
10. To have proficient and non-verbal communication skills relevant to the host culture.
11. The gaining of suitable employment and feeling comfortable at work, as well as showing the capacity to advance in a career.
12. To maintain self-confidence, a positive self-image and pride in oneself.
13. The capacity to show realistic expectations for oneself and others.
14. The capacity to make use of community support services such as medical and legal facilities on his/her own.
15. A good knowledge of community, including awareness of community services and resources.

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[2] The Delphi method is a form of panel research that begins by identifying knowledgeable experts in the field who are asked to brainstorm and identify key indicators. This list is then sent out to a large group or panel of knowledgeable people including policy makers, service providers, key stakeholders, clients and those directly affected, to rank and priorize. The results of the first round of rankings are shared with the panel members who then proceed to confirm or disconfirm their agreement of the rankings. Several rounds of rankings may occur. The process results in indicators arrived at through a consensual process which reflects their relative importance to those working in the field. The results are very much affected by who constitutes the original panel and the composition of the panel group.

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Ervin (1994) drew implications for the relatively undeveloped area of health promotion and wellness for immigrants, viewing integration in terms of good health and well-being of individuals, communities and the nation. He argues for more research, suggests strategies for policy, and argues that strategies must develop at the community level and not be imposed in a top-down approach.

Summary

Literature reviewed indicates that very little direct research relevant to the purpose of this study has been undertaken to date. The concepts of racialisation, feminisation and intersectionality were introduced as key conceptual terms to discuss policy issues concerning racialised women. Recent research calls for the reconceptualisation of the terms "immigrant, refugee, and visible minority women". They should not be taken for granted as natural categories. Researchers generally caution against the unproblematic use of these terms as categories and as "variables" in survey research and policy formation. Status of Women Canada's (1998) report on the research workshop, titled *Gendering Immigration/Integration Policy,* was suggested as an excellent review of the current policy research literature. But we found very limited studies that address women's programs in the immigrant settlement and integration sector related to performance indicators for programs for immigrant, refugee and visible minority women.

Recommendations

Due to the paucity of policy-oriented research in this field, it is recommended that MRMI:

1. *Establish research partnerships among women-centred academic and community-based researchers, policy makers, community based organizations and service consumers to identify research needs and priorities for action in BC.*
2. *Ensure an intersectional gender, race, class, sexuality and language sensitive analytical framework is incorporated into all aspects of the Ministry's policy processes.*
3. *Ensure that further research efforts to identify qualitative outcome measures include consultation with racialised women clients and consumers as well as service providers.*
4. *Consider replicating the Ervin study in BC after incorporating gender into the research framework.*

OUTCOMES

Introduction to Qualitative Outcomes

This section of the report provides an overview of outcomes for selected projects directed at immigrant, refugee and visible minority women, and identifies qualitative performance statements to complement outcomes and indicators identified in the Ministry's Settlement Services Outcomes Measurement Framework, 1998. The main objective of this study was to examine MRMI's Community Liaison Division funding programs, particularly Core, Immigrant Settlement, Anti-racism and Multiculturalism Programs targeting immigrant, refugee and visible minority women. The findings provide a gender-specific, comprehensive, detailed and focused set of outcomes and indicators that emerge directly from selected programs.

This chapter presents a summary and overview of selected informant's responses to questions on outcomes. Discussion and further analysis follows in the findings sections of the report. Readers need to bear in mind that the study sampled only a handful of projects that were explicitly targeted to "refugee" and "visible minority" women as distinct from "immigrant women". The majority of projects were aimed at immigrant women, that is, women who had recently arrived in Canada through regular immigration channels.

Respondents identified several types of project outcomes. An analysis of outcome statements generated a classification framework that is presented in Tables 1 - 4. This framework categorised outcomes along two dimensions: levels of outcome statements and types of outcomes:

- Four levels of outcome statements are identified: individual, program, institutional/organizational and community;
- Three types of outcomes are considered: intended, unintended and contradictory.

Levels of Outcomes

Individual level outcomes include all those outcome statements related to projects designed to assist individual immigrant or refugee women even if the project is delivered by group methods. (See Table 1)

Program level outcomes include statements related to components of the program, for example: design, planning, implementation, methodology and staffing. (See Table 2)

Institutional or organizational level outcomes include statements about project aims regarding organizational change and development. (See Table 3)

Community level outcomes include statements related to community development type projects and general, overall effects of funded projects on the community as a whole. (See Table 4)

Types of Outcomes

Intended or direct outcomes are those outcomes statements that respondents identified as directly related to the stated goals of a project or program.

Indirect or unintended outcomes are statements that refer to general effects over an extended period of time and/or project effects that are not clearly intended outcomes.

Contradictory outcomes are those outcome statements where multiple effects can be identified, such as when one outcome was countered by another direct or indirect outcome.

Direct, indirect and contradictory outcomes are thematically grouped in each table to illustrate how intended outcomes may have indirect or contradictory effects.

Table One · Individual Level Outcomes

Key to Selected Projects

1 = ESL, Information / Orientation or Social support-based Immigrant Women's Programs
2 = Family Support & Parenting Programs
3 = Bridge (PIRS)
4 = LEAD (PIRS)
5 = Ethno-specific Community Outreach Programs
6 = Youth Outreach Programs
7 = Immigrant Women's Advocacy Group
8 = Multicultural Access Institutional Change Program
9 = Anti-Racism Project
10 = Organizational Development with BCIVMW
11 = Working Group on Poverty

Intended / Direct	*Unintended / Indirect*	*Contradictory*
Establish friendships (1-7) ***Build*** social networks (1-7) ***Increase*** self-esteem (1-7,10) ***Increase*** self-confidence (1-7,10) ***Improve*** communication Parent/Child; Parent/School Parent/School/Child (1,3,6) ***Increase*** awareness of women's rights (1-3) ***Encourage*** women to talk about harassment, abuse and violence in a supportive environment (1-3)		Increasing awareness of women's rights also increases male' sense of loss of control and powerlessness and may exacerbate family problems (1-3) Programs for ethnic youth increase youth self-esteem while sometimes alienating parents (2, 6,)
Increase confidence in speaking English in public (1-4, 7,10) ***Identify*** next steps to independence(1, 3,4) ***Develop*** leadership abilities(3,4,5, 6,8,10) ***Increase*** volunteerism (1, 3, 4, 5, 8) ***Provide*** volunteer field placement opportunities (3,4) ***Build*** more positive and stable sense of self-identity as a minority person (1,2,3,4,6,7,10) ***Expose*** women to other women of various ethno-cultural backgrounds (1-10)	Greater visibility given to immigrant women and their abilities and issues (1,2,3,4)	Women are prepared to take next steps through support programs but find there are limited opportunities: in employment, volunteer leadership positions, further training, etc.(1-6, 10) Racialised women volunteers and workers obtain experience and training through funded programs but find there are few opportunities for advancement, although there are increasing opportunities for horizontal moves between community-based agencies. (1-5, 10)
Increase knowledge of and links to community resources (1-7,10) ***Increase*** use of community resources (1-7)	Uncover & identify new needs (1-7)	

Table Two · Program Level Outcomes

Key to Selected Projects

1 = ESL, Information / Orientation or Social support-based Immigrant Women's Programs

2 = Family Support & Parenting Programs

3 = Bridge (PIRS)

4 = LEAD (PIRS)

5 = Ethno-specific Community Outreach Programs

6 = Youth Outreach Programs

7 = Immigrant Women's Advocacy Group

8 = Multicultural Access Institutional Change Program

9 = Anti-Racism Project

10 = Organizational Development with BCIVMW

11 = Working Group on Poverty

Intended / Direct	*Unintended / Indirect*	*Contradictory*
Within mainstream groups, ***Establish*** that multicultural realities exist (8,10) ***Establish*** that needs in immigrant, refugee, visible minority communities exist (1-11) ***Develop*** effective and appropriate partnerships (1-8,10) ***Employ*** team approach to program implementation when working with community partners (1, 2,3,4)	Outreach workers feel isolated in outreach facility (5,6) High staff turnover from burnout, low salaries, & lack of career advancement (1-6 & 8) Program uncovers problems/needs but lacks appropriate referrals esp. in Health and Counseling areas (1-6 & 8) Project results in debates over "time to change" rationale and demand for needs assessments as a way to delay change and the question of "what need?" to excuse lack of progress on anti-racism and equity (8) Resource people used in women's programs become partner agencies for joint programming (1,2,3,4,5) Spin-off programs develop to serve seniors, children and men (1-5 & 7)	The more successfully the Project meets needs and demands for services, the more needs are uncovered and the more the system is unwilling or unable to respond, hence the greater the level of burnout and frustration among staff. The higher the rate of staff turnover, the less likely the program is able to grow and sustain positive outcomes (2,5,6,7,8,10) Short-term projects provide badly needed support services, but these services are often "thin" and not equivalent in quality to services available to majority citizens through mainstream agencies thereby establishing a two-tier human services system(2)
Establish trust with target groups (1-8) ***Create*** positive role models for immigrant women and female youth (3,4,5,6,10) ***Women*** assume majority of responsibility for organizing their own programs based on their own needs and skills (5) ***Ethno-specific*** immigrant women's organizations develop out of agency programs and take active role in civil society (1, 2, 5) ***Bring*** together through conference people who would not normally be in dialogue on racism and sexism (9) ***High*** school students take collective action against racism (9)	Spin-offs include new self-help projects by immigrant women, catering and food purchasing coops (1, 5) Where power relations are not made explicit and group has not been trained in dealing with intra-group conflict, language, ethnic, class, racial, religious differences can threaten the cohesion of the group in self-help projects (10) Spin-offs include new partnerships such as Journeys Project (SFU/MOSAIC), training programs with community colleges in employment related skills for women.	

Table Three · Organizational / Institutional Level Outcomes

Key to Selected Projects

1 = ESL, Information / Orientation or Social support-based Immigrant Women's Programs

2 = Family Support & Parenting Programs

3 = Bridge (PIRS)

4 = LEAD (PIRS)

5 = Ethno-specific Community Outreach Programs

6 = Youth Outreach Programs

7 = Immigrant Women's Advocacy Group

8 = Multicultural Access Institutional Change Program

9 = Anti-Racism Project

10 = Organizational Development with BCIVMW

11 = Working Group on Poverty

Intended / Direct	*Unintended / Indirect*	*Contradictory*
Organization identifies and responds to newly identified needs (1-8)	Ethno-specific community outreach projects for youth attract youth to one centre because a level of comfort/ identification has been established; draws youth away from other centres; over long term, community & neighbourhood centres are perceived as serving one or two ethnic groups instead of entire neighbourhood (6)	The more successfully the organisation meets needs/demands for services, the more needs are uncovered and the more the system is unwilling or unable to respond, increasing burnout and frustration among staff. Higher rate of staff turnover decreases likelihood that the program will be able to grow and sustain positive outcomes (2,5,6,7,8,10)
	High staff turnover stunts growth of program (6,8,9)	Short-term projects provide badly needed support services, but are often "thin", unequal to mainstream services for majority citizens, establishing a two-tier human services system(2)
Organization finds and develops new partnerships and funding sources (1-8,10)	In general, short-term funding and shifting priorities result in wasted effort and lack of growth in anti-racism and multiculturalism sector	Feelings of disempowerment for racialised women workers in agencies due to marginal working conditions (1-7)
Diversity committees develop in mainstream organizations (8)	Projects reveal systemic problems in institutional policies and practices e.g. lack of, and unenforced, formal Affirmative Action, Employment Equity policies, very narrow equity strategies, limiting union regulations, inadequate research and knowledge about issues, etc. (6, 8)	Attempting to meet demands within existing structure overburdens leadership (10)
Partnering organization finds volunteers, participants, clients shift and broaden to include more individuals from more diverse groups (8)		Given inadequate support, top-down & top-heavy decision-making and indirect membership representational structure—the more work the organization takes on, the greater the likelihood of leadership burnout (10)
Greater acceptance and understanding, cultural skills develop among front-line and management staff at partner agencies (2,3,4 & 8)	Project sponsor discovers assumptions and blind spots in program design that affects ability to sustain change (5,6,8), e.g. emphasis on providing individual direct service overshadows attention to building support for longer term systemic change	
	Project staff cross-over into settlement services to/and brings a more critical analysis of racism and sexism to settlement and multiculturalism work (2)	Agencies serving as the administrative channel for an institutional change project risk being identified as the "sponsor" causing lack of clarity, particularly with staff turn-over (8)
Organizational and leadership skills for women are developed through training and workshops for immigrant, refugee and immigrant women (7 & 10)	Lack of representation and direct voice from poor immigrant, refugee and visible minority women results in the racialization and feminisation of poverty being left off the table despite goals of coalition (11)	Interagency partnerships and networks form around diversity issues, but do not necessarily result in better services to racialised women because gender dynamics are overlooked (8,9,11)
Informal practices to ***Encourage*** immigrant women's participation within immigrant serving agencies are formalised.	Project uncovers interpersonal and organizational/systemic racism directed at worker in sponsoring as well as partnering agency (5,6)	Although diversity committees and support programs develop, racialised women do not have organizational vehicles to express their needs in/on their own terms (1-11)
	A partnership with a formal, mainstream organization results in fees that are too high for some refugee and immigrant women who are the principal targets of the program (1)	Short-term, part-time day programs for homebound mothers of young children produce a hidden class barrier that screens out working class immigrant/refugee women. Programs and staffing conditions favour women who choose or do not need to work full-time; other women cannot attend day-time programs (1-5)

Table Four · Community Level Outcomes

Key to Selected Projects

1 = ESL, Information / Orientation or Social support-based Immigrant Women's Programs
2 = Family Support & Parenting Programs
3 = Bridge (PIRS)
4 = LEAD (PIRS)
5 = Ethno-specific Community Outreach Programs
6 = Youth Outreach Programs
7 = Immigrant Women's Advocacy Group
8 = Multicultural Access Institutional Change Program
9 = Anti-Racism Project
10 = Organizational Development with BCIVMW
11 = Working Group on Poverty

Intended / Direct	*Unintended / Indirect*	*Contradictory*
Ethno-Linguistic-Specific Issue-Based Outreach and Community Organizing Programs establish community identity, e.g. "African" identity becomes more inclusive based on community decision/self-definition (5, 8, 9)		
Coalition of like-minded organizations mobilizes to address societal issue of poverty and immigrants/refugees, identifies legislative effect and lobbies for change (11);	Over time, cross-sectoral relationships become easier to establish--the floor raises, starting points move ahead (1-11)	Racism, exclusion and marginalisation of racialised women persists despite partnerships and coalitions. New civic participation strategies develop to address economic pressures of devolution & government downsizing such as coalitions, consultative partnerships, strategic inter-agency linkages, but these do not necessarily adopt a gender analysis. Immigrant and refugee women's concerns may still remain on the margins or hidden.
Groups that have never worked together, begin communicating across differences to address racism in rural community (9)	Racism and level of hostility become visible rather than staying hidden in community (9)	
Immigrant and refugee women are recognized as leaders and resource people in community development (2,4,5,10) ***Partnerships*** strengthen and new partnerships develop helping to bring about more sustainable multicultural change	More trained immigrant, refugee women are available for leadership positions; over long-term communities become enriched (3 & 10)	Despite growing awareness of importance of racialised women's contributions to a strong multicultural civil society, a coordinated and comprehensive framework of government programs does not exist to support racialised women's contributions beyond a very limited, mainly domestic domain.(1-10) Over the long term, increased direct service in immigrant settlement and orientation does not help social integration of 1st and 2nd generation girls and female youth, but this does not become apparent until several years later (6)
		Despite programs for violent men and support groups for immigrant women, incidents of family violence continue to increase, paralleling situation in larger community (2);

Discussion of Outcome Statements

Tables 1 - 4 indicate that individual and program level outcome statements were most often identified by respondents. Unintended and indirect outcomes identified at the individual and program levels relate primarily to staffing concerns, uncovering of new needs, lack of appropriate referrals and developing spin-off programs.

Respondents found it difficult to identify direct outcomes at the institutional and community levels, unless the project was conceptualized as a community-level project at the outset. Perhaps not unexpectedly, due to the greater number of factors and relationships involved in organizational or institutional level projects, respondents identified more unintended and contradictory outcomes than intended/direct outcomes. Also, the time factor must be considered when identifying community-level outcomes. Most effects at the community level are likely to occur over an extended period. Unless the conditions at the start of a project are clearly and carefully documented, it is difficult to return to and reconstruct the context of the project when it first began, and to link present conditions with past conditions. Thus, it is not surprising that respondents found it more challenging to articulate community-level direct outcomes. In future, it may be productive to document qualitatively and quantitatively, the benchmark conditions in a targeted community against which qualitative outcome statements can later be evaluated.

Recommendation:

In the future, document qualitatively and quantitatively the benchmark conditions in a targeted community against which qualitative outcome statements can later be evaluated.

Time is an important factor in community development work, as project outcomes evolve over time and this dynamic of emergence and development should be accommodated in MRMI's outcome measurement plan.

Analysis Challenges

One of the challenges in analyzing qualitative data is the problem of establishing links from micro-level (personal and individual) to mezzo (institutional) and macro (community and societal) level outcomes. Respondents often made societal level outcome claims without providing much evidence as to the nature of the relationship between a program designed to assist individuals and these claims. For example, there were several instances where a respondent attributed higher rates of social integration to a project teaching women conversational English. However, little evidence could be provided to support such a generalization, since program evaluation measures were not designed to measure societal rates of integration, only individual level learning and satisfaction outcomes. Individuals who participated in the program may have been assisted in their personal integration into society, but there is little substantiating evidence to support claims that integration rates increased. There is a need for more clarification on the appropriateness of qualitative statements and concrete data to support claims at each level of program outcome.

Recommendation:

Sponsoring organisations should review and clarify the appropriateness of qualitative statements and concrete data collected to support claims at each level of program outcome.

Another analytical challenge is to link these outcome statements to program monitoring questions which in turn are linked to policy level evaluation and decision making.

A better integration of analytical and applied policy research might assist in identifying larger implications and generalizations at the societal level that would then inform program design and policy evaluation processes.

A second concern is the uneasy fit between "technical" outcomes for program design and policy improvement, and "advocacy" outcomes for social change. For example, there may be occasions, as identified by respondents in this study, where doing more of the same, only better, can run counter to the overall goal of social justice and equality within a multicultural society because institutional and systemic structures of inequality are reinforced rather than dismantled. Further research and discussion with all stakeholders is needed around this topic.

Recommendation:

To integrate program and organisational level outcomes with both the broader community level and policy evaluation, MRMI should integrate theoretically informed analytical research into its policy driven performance measurement plans to allow for the development of broader implications of program outcomes.

As one step in clarifying the linkages between levels of outcomes, applicants for funding for service provision might be requested to specify precise outcomes at different levels where these can be identified in advance. In final reports, project sponsors might be asked to identify contradictory outcomes identified in the course of implementing the project and what, if anything, was done to resolve them. A similar approach may be followed with advocacy-type projects, where project sponsors might be requested to specify the legislative or policy change to be targeted and the outcomes the project achieved or failed to achieve.

A methodology to develop key outcome measures and indicators of successful adaptation and integration for immigrants at the individual level was found in a Saskatchewan study using a Delphi approach (Ervin, 1994). Ervin's study demonstrates the application of one methodology that might be used to identify key outcome measures and performance indicators.

The detailed case reports in Appendix 2 provide examples of specific indicators for each level of program outcome.

Conclusions and Further Questions

Qualitative outcome statements identified in this study may be used in conjunction with the quantitative performance outcome indicators developed in the settlement services outcomes measurement plan to evaluate and monitor funding and policies. The link between the two systems needs careful attention. For example, will quantitative measures be considered primary and qualitative indicators be seen as complementary? Or will one system of indicators be more appropriate for certain types of projects? Broadening the identification of outcomes statements to include indirect and contradictory outcomes allows program administrators to express a more accurate description of outcomes. This approach is also more useful to funders because indirect and contradictory outcomes signal new and emerging issues that may need to be addressed as funding priorities.

Recommendation:

Discuss and clarify the relationship between quantitative and qualitative indicators so that organisations will fully understand the uses to which the information will be put and the relative emphases that the Ministry will place on different types of performance measures.

Subsequent chapters of this report discuss issues and concerns related to outcomes identified in this study.

"BEST PRACTICES" & STRATEGIES

The researcher was asked to identify, where possible, "best practices" gained by community agencies through experience. The “best practices” identified are primarily relevant to group-based immigrant women support programs with an ESL, Life Skills, and/or information and orientation focus. These programs may be ethno-linguistic-specific or multi-ethnic, multi-lingual oriented. Since the study was not intended to investigate best practices for all programs, the list should be considered partial, preliminary and not entirely representative of the full range of funded MRMI projects and programs targeting immigrant, refugee and visible minority women. The list is therefore a starting point for a future, more comprehensive compilation of indicators of successful practice.

The list of "best practices" were compiled from interviews with respondents whose programs were functioning at different stages of program development and implementation. Each of the following practices are discussed in detail under the following categories:

- Program Planning and Design
- Recruiting Participants, Advertising
- Community Outreach
- Selecting Participants
- Determining Group/Class Size
- Retaining Participants and Sustaining Interest
- Finding Space and Scheduling
- Finding Speakers
- Resolving Conflicts, Tensions
- Evaluating Programs
- Making Referrals
- Dealing with Language Barriers in Low-level English or Multi-lingual Groups
- Finding and Working with Partners

Agencies that described similar best practices are identified in most cases. Where no organisations are identified, the best practice was a general summation of comments from several organisations.

Program Planning and Design

In designing programs, some strategies are common and some are particular to ethno-specific groups. Targeted ethno-specific programs are generally not available outside Vancouver, although some programs may be ethno-specific or may have two language groups, not by design, but because the language skills and ethnic/cultural expertise of the program coordinator, teacher or outreach worker attracts women from the same language or ethnic group.

Some general principles include:

- Design programs to meet the needs of the specific target group. The process for identifying "needs" should include members of the target group.

- Recognize that immigrant/visible minority women are not a homogenous group.

- Consult widely. In Vancouver, where there is a large network of immigrant and multicultural community workers, staff consult widely with others regarding program location, scheduling, advertising and recruitment.

  For example, with the Cambodian women's program, the agency conducted research to identify exactly where the Cambodian-Canadian members lived and which schools their children attended. Principals, counselors and teachers at those schools became key resource persons, providing information for program design. The school staff were asked questions such as: "What are the main groups in this school? Which families come to your school? Which families do you feel have difficulty communicating with the school? Which groups are in real need? Which groups should we be serving? Is there a location in the neighbourhood that women can walk to? Are some children demonstrating poor school performance or behaviour problems?" These questions helped to identify which immigrant groups were in greatest need of assistance from the organisation.

- Ask knowledgeable women community leaders (male community leaders will not have all the knowledge that is needed to design programs for women): "What are the barriers to immigrant women's access to services in your community? What makes it difficult for women to participate in community programs? Do women have the information they need about programs?" (PIRS, COV, MOSAIC)

- Establish a program advisory committee with representatives from the target group. (PIRS, MFC)

- Only conduct programs that are clearly within the organisation's mandate and for which the organisation has the knowledge, skills and capacity to support. (PIRS, MFC)

- Outreach work is very time consuming and requires a long-term commitment. Don't expect to fill programs immediately if you are targeting a new community. The numbers may be as small as 2 or 3 women to start with and there may be a high turnover rate until trust and confidence is established among women as staff and program participants. (ISS, MOSAIC, COV, PIRS, MFC)

Recruiting Participants and Advertising

- Provide bus fare and child care subsidies for low income immigrant women, and advertise that these essential subsidies are available. Without them, women with young children may not be able to participate.
  (MOSAIC, PIRS, ICA, ISS, MFC, BFLI)

- Word of mouth is generally recognized as the most effective means of recruiting women participants. (MOSAIC, PIRS, ICA, ISS, MFC, ACS, WWRS). This is particularly critical if members of the target group are not highly literate in their own language.

- Use the ethnic media where available.

- Advertise where women from the targeted group are known to gather, for example, at places of worship, shops, laundromats, restaurants and work sites. (ACS, MOSAIC, ISS, PIRS, NSMS)

- Use ethnic networks and member organisations to spread the word that services/programs are available. (ICA)

- In smaller communities, go through the telephone book and look for last names that are known to be from the group you are targeting. These persons may know of recently arrived immigrants whose names are not listed in the phone book. (ICA)

- Door to door visits are particularly useful in small communities. (WWRS)

Community Outreach & Recruitment

- Have a specific person assigned to do community outreach, especially when offering ethno-specific programs. (MOSAIC, PIRS, ISS). This individual needs to: be knowledgeable about the resources in the ethnic community, speak the language(s), be known and respected in the community, be sensitive to political differences, and be able to bridge the ethnic and Canadian cultures. The outreach worker should be secure in their own identity and have dealt with their own personal issues around settlement, adjustment and integration. Some respondents suggested that the individual should have been through the immigrant settlement experience, while others suggested that such a direct experience is not necessary, although knowledge and awareness of this experience are essential. Country of origin experience with community development or other social service experience with the particular target group, be they women, girls, elderly women, or women farm workers is desirable. Formal qualifications, either from Canada or the home country, are considered desirable but degrees are not necessary (ISS, PIRS, MOSAIC, MFC, COV).

- To ensure all spaces in a class size of 12-15 are filled, about 20 individuals should be recruited (PIRS).

- Solicit referrals from other programs, community partners, community workers, schools, social service agencies and government departments. Once a program has an established track record, referrals will be made without solicitation.

- For posters or brochures, use the mother tongue of the ethnic group you are trying to reach. There is no point advertising in English if you wish to offer an ESL group to non-English speaking women. Ensure that there are the necessary language resources available to respond to inquiries.

Selecting Participants

- Generally, programs have an open-door policy and may maintain a waiting list. In language programs, language screening helps to place individuals in appropriate language classes.

Determining Group/Class Size

- The ideal size for a discussion group, such as PIRS's LEAD or Building Bridges programs, is 10 - 12 people; 8 participants is too few for effective discussion groups. (PIRS)

- For drop-in programs, 20-25 women is a desirable group size (but this number is also dependent on the population demographics in the community in which the program is located). (ICA)

Retaining Participants and Sustaining Interest

- Ensure that the whole family is included in some aspect of the program, for example, social events around religious holidays, festivals, open houses, program information sessions, program openings and closings. (NSMS, ICA, MOSAIC, MFC)

- Provide preschool aged children with enriched, stimulating and quality child care. (NSMS, PIRS)

- Sustaining interest should be balanced with overcoming dependency. In open intake programs, ideally there should be a rotation in group membership, people who stay from one group to the next, new people coming in and experienced people moving out. The right balance depends on the group. There should be a core group of 4 to 5 experienced women who take care of core program functions. The right mixture is some new participants, some experienced participants who need to stay on, and some who are ready to move on. (PIRS, MOSAIC)

- Some facilitation strategies for retaining participants and sustaining their interest include:
  - maintaining personal contacts with each woman;
  - maintaining a one to one interaction;
  - showing genuine interest in the women's lives;
  - supporting peer networks that develop out of the group;
  - creating a sense of group ownership by having the women participate in decision making; and,
  - building social events into the program.

  (NSMS, ACS, PIRS, MOSAIC, MFC, ICA, BFLI)

Finding Space and Scheduling:

- Not any space will do. The location has to be easily accessible by public transportation. It must be well lit. It should be located where other community programs are being held, such as a community centre or a neighbourhood house, so that these centres increase contact with people who would not normally be accessing their programs. (PIRS)

- Locate in a community facility that is mandated to provide educational, recreational, health or information services. These locations help to introduce women to mainstream organizations and services. It helps to draw women out of their smaller ethnic community/family networks and into wider society and helps the program sponsor build links to mainstream institutions for joint programming (PIRS). The partnering organization benefits by attracting participants or clients from groups they have previously been unable to reach.

- In general, look for locations that women with young children can walk to. However, a small group may be geographically dispersed, like the Kurdish community, in which case try to find a location that is central and easily accessible from different directions by bus. (PIRS)

- Space for child care must meet provincial regulations. (PIRS, BFLI)

- Set programs at times that are convenient for women. Programs targeting mothers with young children are better in the morning after 9 a.m. Programs for working women are better scheduled on weekend mornings or in the evenings when other family members can baby-sit. (PIRS)

- For term-specific programs, 10 to 12 weeks seems to be the norm. (PIRS)

- Drop-in programs must be held regularly at a consistent time. (ICA)

Finding Speakers

- Build an inventory of speakers who are able to communicate effectively to immigrant women. Most come through other cooperating community organizations.

- Network and share resources with other instructors or group facilitators

Resolving Conflicts, Tensions

- Train facilitators in group dynamics and group process skills. (MFC)

- Try not to have more than two different languages represented in a group. (PIRS)

Evaluating Programs

- Use many different methods, formal and informal, oral and written.

- Conduct mid-term and end of program evaluations.

- Take evaluation seriously as a means to improve programs and services.

- Use evaluation methods that are appropriate to the program, e.g., for language programs, use standardized assessments, benchmarks and other language tests.

- Look at participation rates and patterns of participation over time.

- Look at the availability of resources and clearly identify what is and what is not available.

- Outcome evaluation for funders and program improvement evaluation to meet agency needs are quite different, and programs need to continually examine different types of formal and informal evaluation tools to seek information that helps improve delivery of services. (PIRS)

Making Referrals

- Useful referrals come from knowing who you are referring a client to. *"It is not enough to give the phone number of an agency. You have to really know if the referral is appropriate for that person."*

- There are not enough bilingual, culturally appropriate services, although in Vancouver this is changing.

Dealing with Language Barriers in Low-level English or Multi-lingual Groups

- Where staff are not fluent in the language spoken by the group members, use trained volunteers to help with translation.

- Buddy-up those who have some fluency in English with non-English speakers.

- Ask guest presenters to rephrase their statements in simpler language if participants are looking disinterested or confused.

Finding and Working with Partners

- Maintain an on-going search for potential partners. Choose partners who understand and support the goals of the program, who value diversity and who are willing to follow a team approach to supporting immigrant women. (MOSAIC, ICA, ISS, PIRS, BFLI)

- When choosing partners, look for a commitment to empowering women, to the principles of multiculturalism and to openness and flexibility in curriculum.

- Be willing to work with partners from their starting point but have resources and information available to support their move from a mono-cultural/lingual assimilationist to a multi-cultural/lingual, inclusive environment.

- Deal with racism immediately and support staff and group participants especially in community locations where the partner may have little experience with non-mainstream clients.

PERCEPTIONS & ASSUMPTIONS AROUND "IMMIGRANT WOMEN"

Respondents were asked questions about their perceptions of immigrant, refugee and visible minority women as a priority target group. The purpose was to investigate the links between the types of programs offered, the program outcomes and the perceptions/assumptions about the target group. That is, to determine the extent to which outcomes linked to the ways in which the target group is perceived, and how programs or projects are designed to meet the perceived needs of the target population.

This section describes various approaches to defining "immigrant, refugee and visible minority women" as a target group; discusses the ways in which perceptions of "immigrant, refugee and visible minority women" are influenced by the funding environment; and, presents an example of how dominant patriarchal ideologies around women's roles in the family influence program design.

Approaches to "Immigrant Women" as a Target Population

MRMI policies acknowledge diversity among immigrant, refugee and visible minority women and identify immigrant women as a priority target group for funding. Diversity was reflected in the variety of ways respondents perceived "immigrant, refugee and visible minority women" as a target group. As the Ministry does not define "immigrant, refugee and visible minority women" in operational terms, this, in effect, allows program managers to define the target population differently according to several factors including overall program goals and outreach methods, recruitment and means of involving women. Four broad approaches were identified in the case studies: gender-specific, needs-based; gender-neutral, service-based; gender and ethno-specific; and gender-specific, emergent. These are discussed below.

Gender-specific, needs-based approaches: Multilingual and multi-ethnic drop-in information and orientation, ESL, life skills, leadership development and family support programs all tended to perceive the target population in a similar way. These programs identified as their primary target group non-English speaking, house-bound women with pre-school or young children, and 5 years or less residency in Canada. If women were experiencing settlement problems, they were considered part of the target population, regardless of their term of residency. This model of program delivery was the dominant one in the pool of funded programs. The study found that the perception of the target population as housebound with small children has also become the generally accepted perception of immigrant women in the sector.

There is a growing recognition that women's needs differ from those of men and that different services need to be offered. One agency reported that on-site drop-in child care was being offered to clients so that both parents could arrange appointments and visits. This agency also requires both husband and wife to attend orientation sessions to ensure that women get the same information as men about resources in Canada. This example reveals one way that agencies can adopt a more gender sensitive approach in direct service provision.

Gender-neutral, gender-blind, service-based approaches: In services and programs not directly targeted to women, immigrant women were regarded as a subset of immigrants in general. The gender-neutral service-based approach responds to all immigrants in the same manner and does not specifically address immigrant women's preferences and needs or their access to or use of programs and services. In a sense, this is a service driven approach: services are offered and women and men may choose to access them. This approach does not recognize that certain types of services are overwhelmingly used by women, or that women and men have different needs. Agencies estimate that between 60 to 80 per cent of their clients are women.

Gender-specific and Ethno-specific approaches: Women from ethno-specific communities, such as Cambodian, Somalian, Ethiopian, South Asian farm workers, and Vietnamese female youth in special programs, were also identified as distinct target groups. In these projects, community outreach workers — who may work alone or as part of a team consisting of ESL and/or life skills instructor, child care provider, program coordinator and volunteers — recruit participants from one or two specific ethnic communities to join a predetermined program. This program model differs from the community development approach (described below) because it predefines the target population's needs.

Gender-specific and Emergent approaches: The difference between this way of identifying the target population and others is in how "needs", services and the target group are identified. Community development outreach programs view the constitution of women's groups as an outcome of a process rather than as a preexisting and predefined state. The target group of women may not necessarily exist as an identifiable group prior to the community development project and programs. "Needs" have yet to be identified. Community development outreach programs encourage women to develop a common consciousness about their lives, from which they are assisted to develop their own projects and programs. This process may take a long time, especially where there are few institutional structures and there is considerable suspicion of government programs within the ethnic, national, or linguistic community.

One example of this approach was illustrated by the way that a shared community definition of "African" women came about,

> *The people that came were activists within several different communities. Not women's groups, there were no women's groups of African women meeting at the time. In fact there were men as well as women so these [activists] would have been African men, for example, who recognized that their wives were going through a painful experience trying to integrate into Canada. Some were women and some were women that were active within African organizations, not for women, but African organizations trying to unite "Africans" as people going through a common integration experience: facing issues of racism; discrimination; difficulty in dealing with school systems that had different expectations than a system at home; difficulty accessing health services; not knowing where to go for social services: so it was men and women, which was interesting. As with any other program they defined themselves. And then interestingly enough, at one of the very first meetings that we had, the women were asked the same question that you're asking. This is the way we work, in other words "it's your group how do you want membership to look do you have any criteria?" At that first meeting we had _____, there was also a woman from Jamaica, so there was quite a discussion and there were some Canadian born women of African descent. And so there was quite a discussion amongst them as to whether or not they wished to restrict the group to only women born in Africa or could the women be born in the West Indies or could they be Canadian born and not necessarily immigrant but they decided after a big discussion at which _____ facilitated but did not tell them "here's how we're going to define it at ____." They decided after great debate, that might have lasted more than one meeting, that they did not wish to exclude anyone, that any woman that defined herself as being of African descent and identifying with Africa as a part of their heritage, they did not wish to exclude. . .*
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> Source Card ID: 14527

Funders and Immigrant Women as a Target Group

The perception of immigrant women as a target group was also influenced by the funding environment. Respondents mentioned that some funders impose selection criteria on programs for immigrant women. These criteria may include, for example, length of residency in Canada, intentions to enter the labour market, refugee status, language level and recipient status for social assistance or unemployment insurance. The task of gate-keeping and screening different women into different programs often fell to the front-line worker.

The overall effect of this type of "patchwork quilt" approach to defining immigrant women is a lack of coherence and overall coordination in policy and program delivery. Some women are not eligible for certain programs and services; some programs are open to all; some ethno-specific programs are only open to some women; and, women in smaller communities do not have access to the range of programs and services available in the larger centres. One example of how the present unevenness affects immigrant women from smaller communities is demonstrated by larger agencies in Vancouver that offer targeted ethno-specific programs (there are, in fact, very few self-help, community development type programs for immigrant women), while elsewhere in the province these programs do not exist. The City of Vancouver funds ethno-specific women's groups to help women organise, but MRMI does not. The Ministry does fund ethno-specific *programs* for women through the large immigrant serving agencies, but this is not the same as funding an autonomous, grassroots, ethno-specific self-help women's group, as a project sponsor, to work with women from their own ethnic/language/cultural group. Thus, women from outside Vancouver who wish to organize as an ethno-specific or language-specific group are not able to access this type of funding. In addition, the City of Vancouver recognizes that community development is a long, uneven process and is willing to look beyond numbers of participants, which initially may be very small.

Two explanations given by MRMI staff for the reluctance to fund ethno-specific women's groups at the provincial level are that such groups are thought to hinder integration, and funding limitations make it difficult to defend projects reaching only a small number of women. However, there is little evidence that ethno-linguistic-based organising results in greater isolation or hinders social integration, and the criterion of numbers is detrimental to women who live outside the lower mainland. The use of ratios and proportions of ethnic minority representation in a population would be much more fair and allow for comparability across programs.

Outside the heavily populated lower mainland region, ethno-specific community development approaches may be the most effective way of supporting and developing civic participation and social integration skills among non-English speaking immigrant women, and providing services to seniors with limited English and female victims of trauma and family violence. In smaller communities, perhaps more so than larger urban centres, ethno-linguistic-specific community development for women may be needed more urgently because of the target population's greater degree of invisibility, isolation and lack of support.

The Social Construction of Immigrant Women

MRMI staff and leaders of the provincial organization for immigrant and visible minority women (BCIVMW) reported that they draw distinctions between immigrant, refugee and visible minority women in terms of who should address which issues and how issues should be addressed, and even the type of needs that different types of women have. These distinctions influence how minority women as a group are perceived, and the types of program design, content and activities that should be available to each group. One respondent suggested that immigrant women should not have to take on anti-racism work since they are concerned with immediate survival issues, while another respondent suggested that multiculturalism and anti-racism programs are intended mainly for visible minority women, while settlement and integration programs are intended for immigrant women. Another respondent stated that the entire issue of immigration was inherently racist and the sooner this was acknowledged by workers and clients, the better they would be able to make sense of their experiences of marginalisation and exclusion by the dominant culture.

> *It's very important to identify our own identity. It has been my experience that as soon as you talk about visible minority, you are talking about racism issues. which immigrant women are trying to survive as immigrant women, discussions of racism are there, but it is a third or fourth need. Their first need is survival need so what happens is that the tables get totally turned. We have an African worker here. They [non-African black women] say that we don't want to connect with the Caribbean women or the black women from the United States because they are too assertive for us.*
>
> Source Card ID: 15074

In reality, since most recently arrived immigrant women are also visible minority women who must deal simultaneously with the immediate issues of getting established in a new environment, their "visibility" and the resulting experiences of racism, sexism, classism and linguicism, these distinctions remain artificial. The perception that newcomers to Canada need not deal with racism may be partially accurate, however as another respondent pointed out, many immigrants notice their treatment as "other" very quickly. While they may not use the language of "racism and anti-racism", systemic racism structures their experiences in the initial period of settlement and adjustment as well as the longer term integration into Canadian society.

In another project, respondents stated that the community saw itself divided into two groups: First Nations and non-First Nations. In this context, immigrant and non-native visible minority women, while still a minority in the community, were subsumed under and conflated with white, Canadian-born women as "non-First Nations." This example is an important reminder that "immigrant, refugee and visible minority women" are not pre-existing identity categories. They do not constitute a coherent, "natural" constituency. Social positioning depends very much on who is doing the locating and the community context.

Women as Mothers, or Women Equals Family?

One pattern that emerged is that most MRMI funded programs targeting immigrant and refugee women are designed to support and reinforce women's domestic and maternal roles in the family. Most respondents defined immigrant women in these terms and most programs were designed to serve them as mothers, daughters and wives. This perception of women parallels gender assumptions in Canadian immigration policy that views women as dependents on the male head of household and limits women's ability to apply as independent applicants.

CLD's funding allocations reflect this perception of immigrant women. In 1996/7 the proportion of grants under the ISP for families represented 43.18% of the total amount allocated, compared to 10.41% allocated to women's programs. Under the BCAMP in 1996/7, women's projects received only 8% of total grants.

> *there is quite a large portion of _____that is specifically targeted toward women and children. Not women necessarily on their own, but women and children, women as mothers I think is where the first priority is.*
> JL: Women as mothers is your priority?
> *Yes.*
>
> Source Card ID: 15334

* * *

> *. . . it is mostly women as mothers and then support to the women herself with the rationale again that you have to be helping yourself if you want to be a good mother, so the final target again is the child. That's the way I see it.*
>
> Source Card ID: 15525

* * *

> *So basically for the immigrant women what we are targeting—immigrant woman—which means anybody who is struggling with the issues of the settlement process, who feel that something is not in the right place for this person because of the immigration situation. But basically we try to target moms with young children especially so young who are not in the school system, yet because they are at home with the children, really isolated, not speaking the language, there is no connection to other moms or other families or other organizations and there is no information about that. We try to target women who came in about the last 4 years.*
>
> Source Card ID: 15567

Agencies tend to view immigrant women through a conservative traditional lens that locates women in the family. This view underlies the ways agencies target, design and frame programs for immigrant and refugee women even when choosing a name for the program:

> *Okay, so in the case of the Multicultural Family Support Services...that program is set up to specifically support families, but it has a specific target and works predominantly with immigrant and refugee women, specifically those who are visible minority who are survivors of various forms of violence. But we never ever considered calling it Multicultural Women's Support Advocacy Resource Program although the coordinator in that program is doing a lot of advocacy, anti-racism, systemic change work in the community..*
>
> Source Card ID: 15877

Another indication that a traditional view of women is widely held is that programs are often designed for women because women are seen as a means to access other members of the family. Although family is an important base for women, it is not their only, or necessarily their most immediate concern. Women are also concerned with economic security, good health, independence, education and self-esteem, and these issues are overlooked when immigrant women are viewed instrumentally and narrowly as mothers and wives.

Summary & Discussion

Overall, respondents viewed immigrant women in their domestic roles as mothers and wives, a view which delimits and overlooks other roles and identities of immigrant women. While there is a large unmet need among non-English speaking immigrant women who are house-bound with young children, the overwhelming perception of immigrant women in their maternal roles in the family ignores other roles they occupy in society, such as worker, entrepreneur, citizen, student, activist and consumer of services. This supports and perpetuates traditional images of immigrant women as isolated, dependent on men and burdened with children. There is a need to reflect on how availablility of funding programs directed at "family support" may be influencing the high proportion of programs targeting women as clients and participants under the rubric of "the family."

Government policies and agency perceptions and responses to racialised women help to shape public perception. Respondents described programs in terms that reveal underlying gendered, raced and classed assumptions about women.

Recommendation:

More research and education is needed on how programs and policies contribute to a conservative and narrow domestic view of immigrant women in their roles as wives, mothers and daughters, to expose biases that are counter to the stated goals of the Ministry.

More research and education on these issues is needed to bring about critical, self-awareness of biases and discrimination that stand in contradiction to the stated goals of the Ministry's mandate. Funders also need to be conscious of the way their programs help to reinforce widely held misperceptions of immigrant women. Further research needs to be undertaken to examine how this view of immigrant women as a target group affects program decisions and outcomes. This research should be coordinated with a study of the overall funding context for women, to identify the full range of programs for women and how they shape or delimit opportunities for racialised women.

EMPOWERMENT/DISEMPOWERMENT OF RACIALISED WOMEN

Although empowering immigrant and refugee women is not stated explicitly as a goal, it is implicit in the overall aims of CLD funding programs. Respondents were asked to consider how racialised women were empowered by their projects, their sponsoring agency's work, and CLD's overall funding programs.

Respondents differed in their understanding of the term "empowerment". Some saw empowerment primarily as personal empowerment through the development of self-esteem and self-confidence achieved through training. Others viewed empowerment as developing out of group solidarity and support, while yet others viewed empowerment mainly in a political sense, as engagement in collective action and critical consciousness. Many respondents were able to identify program outcomes at each of these levels. Although these dimensions of empowerment are interconnected, for the purpose of this report, responses are summarized in three distinct categories: individual empowerment, group empowerment and organisational empowerment.

Individual Empowerment

As clients or participants, newcomer immigrant and refugee women were thought to be empowered through MRMI supported programs in a number of different ways; for example, by having more confidence speaking English, improving English communication skills, developing and expanding social networks, having access to information, being able to identify resources and supports when needed, being able to communicate with more confidence and assurance, feeling less isolated and alone, finding support for child care, being able to speak knowledgeably about Canadian society and how things work, identifying appropriate next steps, knowing where to go when faced with a problem, being willing to take on leadership positions, and being recognized as a leader by other women in the community.

> *If you have someone who is not understanding [the language] they're not going to feel good about themselves and if they leave they are going to feel even worse about themselves. It [this] program has to be a high intermediate [level of English]. It certainly doesn't have to be perfect. One of the things the women say every time at the end is, "I really felt that*

> *my English improved, I feel like I can speak in front of a group". The other thing they say is, "I've gained confidence, I feel better about myself, better about being here". As simple as, "I've made friends".*
>
> *We do look at empowerment, sometimes I don't like to use that word. It's over used. For some of them getting out of the house, for some, meeting people from other cultures. I mean it's an opportunity for cross cultural communication that they may not have had otherwise. It's an opportunity to meet with more of the mainstream community, also, because we bring in speakers and go on field trips.*
>
> Source Card ID:9880

In programs designed to assist racialised women to find suitable employment, empowerment was defined as taking steps towards economic independence, either through finding a job or taking further training

As workers in the settlement and integration sector, immigrant women were seen as empowered when they sought professional development training, when they became advocates for others, and when they became involved in program planning and program management decisions.

Group Empowerment

Respondents from several programs designed to develop a sense of collectivity were asked how their programs empowered women. As a group, women were seen to be empowered when they took over the planning, implementation and evaluation of their own programs, with gradual lessening of support by staff. This included steps in organising a program, such as identifying and arranging for guest speakers, making appointments for field trips, recruiting new participants and organising social events. Identifying and articulating their own needs and requesting new programs, either for themselves or for their children and spouses, were also identified as indicators of empowerment. Another indicator of empowerment is a decision of group members to continue meeting after the completion of an agency's program. When a women's group decides to organise self-directed meetings, the decision and subsequent action are seen to reflect a growing collective group consciousness based on shared concerns and issues — an indication of group empowerment.

Institutional/organisational Empowerment

Racialised women were seen as empowered within an organisation when they participated at all levels of the organisation — as participants, volunteers, front-line staff, management and Board members. In other words, when the involvement of racialised women goes beyond tokenism to meaningful participation in decision making, then women could be viewed as being organisationally empowered.

The presence of formal and informal policies to reach out and include racialised women in decision making at all levels of an organisation was another indicator. Such policies might include: statements requiring a specific number or proportion of racialised women to serve on boards and committees, requiring gender impact analyses of program decisions, and providing support and training to immigrant and visible minority women who serve as volunteers and as staff.

In the specific example of BCIVMW, projects that enabled racialised women to speak for themselves in political arenas, to take up leadership positions, to conduct research arising out of their own experiences, to analyze and critique policies, and to identify gaps in services, were identified as indicators of empowerment. Racialised women's willingness to speak out and become advocates for themselves and others was seen as an indicator of civic empowerment.

Challenges and Barriers to Empowering Racialised Women in Funded Programs

Respondents identified several barriers and contradictions in the intended outcome of empowerment with regards to how programs are designed, staffed and implemented. The program design in itself can be inherently disempowering for women, even when the program demonstrates good attendance; for example, when the project is designed on a charity model of "doing for", rather than a participatory model of "doing with". Another example is when the coordinator of a program makes all the decisions about programming with little or only token consultation with participants. When the same program is run, more or less unchanged, session after session, with little input from participants, the likelihood that program staff can achieve the goal of empowering women is greatly reduced.

An example of a program design that may have empowering effects for some women and disempowering effects for others, may be seen in multi-ethnic, multi-lingual groups where participants have different levels of English language ability, but the program is conducted mainly in English. When English is used as the common language, low-level or non- English speakers may feel excluded and embarrassed by their inadequate language abilities, while higher-level English speakers are able to participate more fully. Mono-lingualism is particularly alienating in programs that move beyond orientation and information sharing, to collective action and communication for decision making and allocating resources. In such cases, language ability becomes a means by which relations of unequal power are sustained and exercised. The effects of language in participatory processes often remains obscured, surfacing under the guise of other issues.

Another expressed concern is that some women develop a dependency on staff and support programs. In open enrollment programs, some women may not venture beyond the group for friendship and support. They become too comfortable within the group and continue to participate session after session. The coordinator must find ways of encouraging the participant to take the next step to greater independence. However, too often there are very few "next steps" beyond the one program being offered.

It was also suggested that projects designed to encourage racialised women's ability to access mainstream programs may place too much emphasis on the woman herself to change. Not enough emphasis is placed on ensuring that community agencies also change to become more accessible and responsive to racialised women. When women experience a negative response, they may feel unwelcome and misunderstood, which can set up a cycle of resistance to further interactions with a mainstream service provider, increasing dependence on the staff person who initially made the referral, or withdrawal and loss of contact with the program or the support worker.

Where immigrant and refugee women are organised into programs that include "visible minority" women who are already integrated, both groups can feel disempowered. There are many dimensions to this challenge. There are the immediate logistical issues of common language and communication across different levels of English language ability, but there are also tensions that arise over the types of issues that the group may wish to address. Sometimes, more established women, who have moved beyond immediate settlement and survival concerns, wish to address institutional and societal issues. Or conversely, women who are still facing immediate settlement concerns have little knowledge of or patience for dealing with issues such as systemic racism and institutional barriers.

At the community level, when immigrant and multicultural organisations fail to model gender equity and diversity, the lack of role modeling may reinforce the perception that immigrant women do not have the skills and ability to take up professional and managerial positions. Women see themselves reflected by the organisation as clients or front-line workers, but not as leaders and managers.

Lack of an explicit gender sensitive monitoring framework for program planning and design also contributes to the erasure of women's unique needs. Many agencies do not have a system in place to track clients who are accessing their programs, and are unable to provide accurate statistics for specific programs on the gender, racial and ethnic backgrounds of their client population. Many agencies do not have a gender sensitive understanding of their work in the community. For example, one respondent stated that in coalition work on anti-poverty, the coalition had failed to systematically include an analysis of gender differences in immigrant and refugee experiences of poverty, despite knowing that poverty disproportionately disadvantages women and children. Racialised women's voices were also missing from the executive committee where decisions were made. The lack of representation at this level has meant that immigrant and refugee women's issues were not being systematically addressed and included in anti-poverty strategies and actions. As an unintended outcome, the WGOP has added another layer to structures that silence poor, racialised women and their families. Small, self-organised immigrant women's groups lack the resources to represent themselves in coalitions. To bring their issues forward, they must resort to lobbying executive committee members. Although coalition committee members are sympathetic and committed to the issue, the present arrangement simply continues the mediation of racialised women's voices through agency workers and service providers as "client advocates."

Summary & Recommendations

The programs investigated help to empower women at the personal, individual level. At the level of program design, some women may be personally empowered while others may feel disempowered. This can be due to a number of factors, including low levels of English ability in multilingual groups and methods of facilitating the program.

Recommendations:

MRMI CLD should make explicit that the empowerment of immigrant and refugee women is a desired goal both the immigrant settlement and anti-racism and multiculturalism programs. It should require project sponsors to specify, in grant applications and outcome reports, exactly how projects and programs empower racialised women and the specific barriers and challenges that the project addressed and/or uncovered.

Agencies should be encouraged to establish systems of tracking female clients (and their usage of different social services) on the bases of multiple identities, so that the diversity among women can be documented and used for program design and evaluation.

Sponsoring organisations that receive Core funding should be asked to report annually on their progress in implementing affirmative action plans for racialised women at all levels of their organisation. A system of external evaluation by peer agencies should be implemented on a three to five year rotational cycle. The integration of a self and peer group evaluation system will help to institutionalise a gender sensitive framework, as well as providing mechanisms for the sector as a whole to share information and knowledge about empowerment strategies for racialised women.

Programs and organisations should be more sensitive to contradictory effects placing immigrant and refugee women in groups who are at different stages of integration and settlement, and who may have different English language abilities.

Alternative models of advocacy work should be developed that enable racialised poor women who are members of self-organised groups to be directly represented in social change coalitions. Resources should be provided to support these groups.

WORKING CONDITIONS AND FEELINGS OF DISEMPOWERMENT AMONG RACIALISED WOMEN WORKERS IN THE IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT SECTOR

Those respondents who were immigrant women themselves, almost unanimously, expressed dissatisfaction with their working experiences in the immigrant settlement sector. This finding merits special discussion. They expressed feelings of anger, bitterness and frustration with the working conditions in immigrant settlement agencies. They felt exploited and ghettoized. Working conditions for immigrant and visible minority women in this sector are characterized by part-time, low waged, term-limited employment. It is estimated by BCSIWA that women constitute an estimated 80 per cent of the labour force in the settlement sector, 75 per cent of the sector's labour force are first generation immigrants and approximately 70 per cent are visible minority men and women. The majority of immigrant women are concentrated in front line counseling and community outreach jobs (BCSIWA estimates, 1999). In contrast, ESL instruction and employment training jobs, which are more stable and better paid, tend to be occupied by white and/or Canadian-born women.[3] Questions regarding immigrant women's access to training programs to prepare them for these positions need to be raised and addressed.

Occupational Segregation

Immigrant women respondents perceive that agencies ignore and even promote occupational segregation by failing to challenge government funding policies which provide the framework that confines immigrant women to ethno-specific, front-line settlement and counseling jobs. Although respectful of the dedication and commitment of their white, Canadian-born colleagues and managers, respondents felt that they worked within the same general "racial" hierarchy that exists in the wider society. In the "big five" agencies (with the exception of SUCCESS, a community-based agency primarily serving the Chinese speaking community) senior management is almost entirely white and female.

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[3] AMSSA is expected to conclude a wage benefit study of jobs in member agencies at the end of May, 1999. Hopefully this study will provide more detailed information about working conditions in this sector

Some individuals commented on the "institutional oppression" formed by different funding programs that establish a hierarchy and segregation of jobs in the agencies. This funding structure affects the entire experience of work: from wages and benefits received, to self-esteem, to the way work is organized and managed. Management have responded in different ways to the funding context. One settlement agency has placed all workers, including senior management, on one or two year contracts. Two agencies have unionised. But neither strategy has successfully addressed occupational segregation and inequality in wages and benefits. One respondent suggested that unionisation may make it even more difficult to address wage and benefit inequality, by locking workers into fixed labour contracts.

The following excerpts indicate the level of critical self-awareness of working conditions and the frustration experienced by many respondents.

> *If you look at job training programs, most of these [teaching] jobs are taken up by white women, there are some minorities, but most of them are white women. That sector gets paid a lot better than the settlement services sector. So even though workers might have equivalent education and training, the people who work in the training sector at ____ and _____ are a lot better paid and unfortunately most of those jobs are taken up by white women. The ones who work in the settlement sector, the ones who work for ten or fifteen years are getting low pay. Those inequities are there. They are very apparent and at one point it created some conflict. I think ______ has taken some steps to address this.. She has tried to level it out a little bit.*
>
> *The funding from employment will allow you to pay a decent wage, while funding from the settlement sector is always more restricted. The pay is very low. If you try to pay more money, the project officer will question you. So it is institutional oppression. It is created by government in the way that they give out funding. The immigrant settlement funding doesn't give out very much.*
>
> Source Card No. *6920*

The following excerpts illustrate how the context of settlement work, shaped by different funders who provide different levels of funding for similar jobs, affects immigrant women's experiences and perceptions of their work.

> *[Staff are] isolated. And because we're being funded in a disconnected way, that's how we operate together. You are funded by HRDC, oh, that doesn't affect me, I'm funded by these settlement grants. You're funded by whatever, RAP, that doesn't affect me because I'm funded by HRDC. So we just all stay in our own programs. This is my funder category, I don't need to actually know what you do. All we need to know is whether*

> *people can come in and out of the program. So for me it is an open program, anyone can come, so I get to know everybody, but for some employment programs I don't get to know them because you can only go in if you have EI, or you can only go in if you're on welfare, or, what is it? Three years and under at settlement services? So there's all these, it's the only way that we get to know each other. There's no conscious getting to know each other here at the agency.*
>
> Source Card ID No. 15855

> *. . . you'll see a division of labour that is done in a particular way. And so, the people who are providing English, which is huge. And the people who are providing pre-employment programs, are white. The majority. Like if you leave here right now and go to the other office and just walk through all the ESL classes and then [...] walk through all the employment training programs, you will notice that it doesn't look like this. So the settlement services component is community-based, this is more the community part, this is why the agency started in the first place, to help settle and support and integrate immigrants and refugees, but now it's become this 'Human Resources Development Canada,' commodifying labour, processing, making sure everyone has the same English level. So it is very different. The look, the feel of it is very different. [...]...I don't know if it's that way in other places, but I've seen that it's similar in terms of English teachers and the ESL teachers community and if you look at employment counselors, that community, they're not necessarily diverse.*
>
> Source Card ID: 81666

> *. . . we have had discussions that every time a managerial role comes up, it is always someone who is imported from outside. They never give an opportunity to those who have been working there for a very long time because multicultural means that there must be whites there as well. That makes sense...but you start comparing what chances do we have of reaching out and getting someone to get onto the board (or senior position).*
>
> Source Card ID: 37307

> *I am actually the only full-time staff person, but there are 7 of us in the office and several of those people work close to full-time, like 30 hours, 28 hours a week. Our program staff work very part-time: they might do 5 to 9 hours a week. Some of them up to 15, if they're working in two programs. So it's very part-time for them, not only in terms of hours per week, but also weeks per year because we don't run programs in the summer. And our programs are very much based on not providing employment to people, although we do, but on the needs of the client group that we're serving.*
>
> Source Card ID No. 02493

One interesting and innovative response to the prevailing conditions of work for immigrant women was observed in a smaller, women-centered agency, which, while still offering only part-time, seasonal jobs, has refused to permit funders to dictate wages and benefits. The all-women board has taken the position that all staff doing the same job will receive the same wage. Even here, however, the question of wage inequality and how to address this problem has been an issue of ongoing debate at the board level.

Volunteerism

The line between paid and unpaid work is tenuous for immigrant women working in the settlement sector. Some respondents reported that they are often expected to volunteer without pay so that programs continue during times of transitional funding, or to volunteer to do community fund raising or community development and outreach work to their community on behalf of the agency.

> *. . . I am surprised that [the agency] does the amount of work it does. The people here do the amount of work that they do and I'm amazed at how those who run the program, the managers here, can make it work at all because clearly the funding is minimal. The amount of work done that's volunteer work, you wouldn't believe the amount of volunteer work. Just about everything. As I say, coming from a different place, it is really shocking.*
>
> Source Card ID No. 65120

In some ESL, life skills and leadership training programs, immigrant and refugee women are frequently used as "assistants" to white Canadian facilitators. As one interviewee stated, the use of immigrant women as volunteers or "assistants" is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, they gain experience and confidence, but on the other hand, they are not able to earn a living wage.

In addition, the present system screens out working class women who cannot afford to work part-time. Women who need a full-time wage cannot avail themselves of these "opportunities".

> *Some people are looking for part-time work, and it suits them well. Many women who maybe are lucky enough to be in the position where they can afford to work part-time. So for those people, we're really offering them something that fits with their life, but of course many of the staff who work for us start with us and get experience and training and, eventually, they move on to full-time work because that's what they want and we're not able to provide it for them. They may work for us as well as another organization. And that can be difficult because you're pretty scattered, even if those jobs are similar in the kind of work you do, you spend more time getting to work. If you're going to work for 8 hours, your travel time is less significant than if you're going to work for 3 or 4. So there certainly are issues like that for our staff and we've lost some good people because they've needed to find full-time work. Somehow I feel not bad about that, because they're working for [the agency] for a year or two years, and that part-time position has helped them to get that full-time job, so I feel that, while we weren't able to offer a full-time job, we were able to offer an in to the labour market for those women.*
>
> Source Card ID: 2493

Many respondents see volunteering as a positive program outcome for individual immigrant and refugee women. But, as stated earlier, volunteerism in the settlement sector has mixed outcomes. The negative outcomes are more clear when the immigrant settlement and orientation departments are compared to the ESL and employment training departments, even in the same agency. Workers in training departments tend to receive higher compensation for their work and, in general, their jobs are more permanent and full-time. There is little reliance on volunteer labour to keep employment training programs in operation, in contrast to the settlement services sector.

MRMI funding for immigrant women's support groups helps to institutionalise volunteerism in the sector. For example, the dominant PIRS-based model of support groups for immigrant women is designed, in part, to recruit, train and place immigrant women in volunteer positions within the sponsoring agency or in other community-based social service agencies. While these strategies offer opportunities to immigrant and refugee women to practice their skills in the community, they also delimit and channel these skills. Notwithstanding the benefits that individual women gain by volunteering, many skills gained through volunteering at agencies prepare immigrant women to work as front-line staff, regardless of their qualifications and previous work experience. As one agency reported, immigrant women stuff envelopes, send faxes, type letters and act as volunteer receptionists in order to have a single entry on their resume stating that they have "Canadian" work experience. While some do move on to take full-time work in the community, many respondents reported that immigrant and refugee women move out of volunteer positions into part-time paid positions, either at the sponsoring agency or at other community-based agencies. The present model, at best, provides opportunities for lateral movement, but very little formal support for upward or orthogonal movement out of the sector. The present volunteer training model offers the means for reproducing the volunteer base of settlement work in the sector. Immigrant women volunteerism is one of the key mechanisms for racialising and feminising settlement work as low-paid and undervalued. It provides the structural underpinning to support the sector.

Recommendation:

Agencies, workers and government need to acknowledge the inequalities faced by immigrant women who work in this sector. The sector as a whole should reduce reliance on unpaid, volunteer labour to deliver core services.

Lack of Voice and Representation

Immigrant women respondents also expressed dismay that within their own workers' association, BCSIWA, the executive is dominated by white Canadian men and women, even though it was started by racialised workers. Racialised women settlement workers lack a voice and an organisation to voice their concerns. Since immigrant women constitute the front-line staff, they do not have the time or money necessary to participate in BCSIWA meetings. The meetings are attended by management staff who are mainly mainstream, white, Canadian-born men and women. The exclusion of front-line female staff from BCSIWA deliberations is not a consequence of any deliberate actions; rather, like other mechanisms of marginalisation, it's structure reflects operations of the sector as a whole.

Boards of agencies have contributed to the exploitation of immigrant women staff by agreeing to provide services and by managing the agencies in a segmented way so that discrepancies in wages and benefits are accepted as "normal" and unavoidable. The lack of representation of racialised women in decision making positions in this sector contributes to feelings of low self-esteem and self doubt. As one person put it, it leads to "internalized oppression."

> *I've actually attended forums where people openly said, you look at the immigrant agencies, the five big agencies, including Victoria, all the EDs [Executive Directors] are all white people except for SUCCESS. Again it is a matter of leadership of how much energy and effort are being put into leadership by minorities.*
>
> * * *
>
> *When I became the first coordinator, I was the only coordinator of an immigrant background within a system that funded three people of Asian background. They were all Canadian born. So you always hear that you got the job because you can speak Chinese. I don't know whether it is internalized oppression or not, people are talking about it and see that you got the job because of your language, not because of your ability. So you need to get out of that situation. I don't know whether that is part of the self-fulfilling prophecy that maybe minority people who are very good may want to prove themselves elsewhere rather than inside the immigrant communities. But then on the other hand, they won't hire you because they don't think you are good enough to do the job.*
>
> Source Card No. 6920

The lack of professional development and cross-skill training opportunities for front-line workers means that when the need for front-line counseling and settlement services declines for a particular ethno-linguistic group, workers who are seen as only having language and cultural skills are easily dismissed and replaced by new workers who have the language and cultural skills needed to work with newer immigrant groups. When immigration slows and their language and cultural skills are no longer in demand, such as the situation with Portuguese and Italian groups in Vancouver, these older workers find themselves without employment and without possibilities for equivalent employment elsewhere.

Recommendation

Develop cross-skills training programs for front-line community workers who wish to expand their job skills. This could be a combination of on-the-job training programs, internships, secondments, mentoring, and distance education or short, intensive weekend or evening courses.

Investigate the reasons why immigrant women are not gaining certification and training in employment and ESL instruction fields.

A high staff turnover rate was reported in some projects funded by MRMI. In one family support program, there were seven different staff over a period of three years. This obviously affects the quality of service being provided. Different reasons were suggested for high staff turnover in the immigrant settlement services sector: In addition to the working conditions discussed above, some respondents mentioned the isolation and marginalisation that outreach workers experience in doing outreach work in community settings without the support of colleagues who are working on similar issues with similar clients. Burnout and isolation were frequently mentioned.

> *Some get better job opportunities, but I think it's burnout as well. It's about saying we don't want to work in this way and doing this kind of work because you really are struggling to stay above water because people don't know what you do and they don't know the level of intensity. When I worked at a rape crisis centre, you had everyone working on one issue, although there's other issues, child sexual abuse or battering or other issues that women would bring in, but you had everyone working on the same issues and you'd get support and you were working in a kind of team on some level or even in transition house, when I worked in transition houses there'd be still everyone it's very specific and everyone's working on it. Whereas here you have people who are doing basic settlement, food, shelter, clothing, you have people doing ESL, LINC, pre-employment training and then you have the family support program kind of there.*
>
> Source Card ID: 79171

Isolation can also be felt by staff who may be working in an area not directly linked to settlement, or whose political stance on immigration and multiculturalism differs from the majority. If they speak up, they fear that they will not be rehired when their contract or project funding runs out. Yet there is also a sense of not being able to make any significant changes. Consequently, they describe intense feelings of powerlessness.

Immigrant women staff respondents also describe feeling caught between contradictory tensions. On the one hand, they feel loyalty to the agency, a commitment to the work and to helping their ethnic community. On the other hand, they feel unhappy that the core work of settlement services is being sustained only by their willingness to work for low wages in unstable jobs. Many immigrant women workers expressed profound ambivalence about their work. They are extremely dedicated, committed and passionate about their work, yet they also feel isolated, exploited and devalued.

> *It is frustrating and yet it's privileged because I feel that because of my analysis and because I'm kind of defiant and ultimately I'm not scared of being fired and I don't have kids to support or a mortgage to pay, I'm not...like I have a lot of privileges and when I speak about these issues and identify them and a lot of times I end up being the person that other people who are scared to speak about the issues come to because they're really worried that they're never going to work somewhere else and I understand that and I don't have the same level of fear and I have a lot of reasons not to. I don't have those obligations, so a lot of times I'm in a place of speaking up but it is very tiring.*
> JL...feeling isolated?
> *....incredibly isolated, under supported, targeted in terms of other people, I know now we are doing this focus on anti-racism and this is a new thing for this agency. This agency has been around for [many] years and this is a new thing to talk about anti-racism?*
>
> Source Card ID: 81576

As the above excerpt indicates, it is still difficult to address racism within an immigrant settlement agency. In part, this difficulty is due to the general impression, sometimes fostered by the agency's internal culture, that racism is something that occurs "out there" in the wider society, and not "in here" at the agency. In this situation, it is the lack of space to talk about racism as a systemic issue that positions minority women and men in subordinate positions, affecting social relations between people, and that resulting in the pain and hurt that keeps racialised minority women silent and isolated.

Summary and Recommendations

Immigrant women workers' feelings of disempowerment in the settlement sector needs to be openly discussed. Agencies, workers, and government need to publicly recognise and address the inequalities faced by immigrant women working in this sector.

Recommendations:

Immigrant women workers' feelings of disempowerment in the settlement sector need to be put on the table and addressed by all concerned groups. In particular the perceived racial hierarchy in core funded agencies should be addressed. Core funded agencies need to develop an understanding that racism also intersects and transverses relations between people inside and outside the worksite, and should develop anti-racism strategies to address this.

MRMI and the CLD must begin to ensure that the immigrant and multicultural sector, as a specific sector of the broader human services delivery system, is adequately supported and funded. This means investing in and raising the salary and benefit levels of workers.

MRMI together with representative umbrella organisations and client organisations should begin to harmonize and establish a standardized occupational job classification and a compensation system that respects the principle of pay equity, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, age, ability, national origin, and English language skills.

The Ministry and funded organisations should develop an anti-racism strategy for the sector that also incorporates broader anti-discrimination issues such as gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities, and language skills.

Formal policies to promote women in immigrant and multicultural organisations need to be introduced, implemented and subjected to ongoing review.

BCSIWA should address issues of representation within its structure to ensure that the voices of immigrant women front-line settlement workers are represented and heard in all committees and at all levels of the association. If necessary, funds should be set aside to allow employers to give release-time to front-line workers to attend BCSIWA meetings.

INTEGRATING AN ANTI-RACISM GENDER FRAMEWORK AND GENDER ANALYSIS

A broad range of awareness was observed among participating organisations around issues of gender and racism. There were varying levels of awareness of the importance of considering how men and women may differently access and use services, and that men and women of different ethnic/racial backgrounds may have different needs and concerns.

Some organisations with a clear mission to serve women tend to be more aware of gender differences than organisations with a gender-neutral/blind philosophy. On these terms, many women-centered organisations systematically attend to gender differences as well as ethnic, linguistic, religious and national differences. But in one mainstream women-centered organisation, awareness of the intersection between sexism and racism was not reflected in their anti-racism organising. There did not appear to be gender differentiation in anti-racist programming, despite the organising committee's feminist principles.

In organisations that may not have an explicit gender analysis framework, there may still be programs directed explicitly at women; for example, programs reaching out to victims of violence or trauma counseling, parenting programs and women's health programs. Workers in these programs recognised the absence of gender awareness within the structure of their organisations. Within the organisation more generally, there was little recognition of how racism, sexism and classism operate together to shape women's experiences, immigrant settlement and the agency's work itself.

There was a great deal of unevenness in respondents' awareness of the intersection of race, gender and class in shaping immigrant, refugee and visible minority women's lived experiences.

Intersectional Gender Analysis

Having made the above generalisations, there is also evidence of a growing awareness and willingness to recognise differences among "immigrant women". Moving away from a "one size fits all" approach, agencies are recognising the need to offer ethno-linguistic-specific programming that targets immigrant women from different ethnic/language groups, for example, Vietnamese youth and South Asian farm workers. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, MRMI's funding programs tend to support programs that reflect a uni-dimensional view of "immigrant women".

Recommendation:

The Ministry should signal to the community, especially outside of Vancouver, that ethno-specific projects for women are welcomed.

In terms of anti-racism and multiculturalism programs, an intersectional gender framework would recognize that women of different race, class, sexuality, language and abilities have different issues in terms of social justice, equality and diversity. White, majority women need to do different kinds of anti-racism work than minority women. Hence, anti-racism projects need to be tailored to the different concerns and issues of women as a heterogeneous social group. Anti-racist multicultural projects need to recognize power differences among dominant majority and subordinated minority women. When white, Caucasian women are included as participants, organisers or targets of projects and programs, there is a need to explicitly acknowledge that power works to position women differently.

Recommendation:

There should be support and recognition given to individuals and groups who have developed expertise in gender sensitive anti-racism training in the multicultural sector, while recognising that such knowledge and expertise is continually changing and developing.

Mainstream Women's Groups, Immigrant Women's Groups and Racialised Women

One mainstream rural women's organisation was studied. In keeping with the trend for mainstream women's organisations to include minority women into their action plans, how and which minority women are included appears to be context specific and in need of more research and education. In the case of this particular organisation, immigrant and refugee women were included in the "non-First Nations" category as opposed to the "First Nations" category. As an anti-racism project, it was unclear how multiculturalism and anti-racism were being conceptualised. Much work remains to be done to recognise the differences and commonalities among immigrant, refugee, First Nations and non-First Nations citizens in rural and urban communities. Rather than taking these categories as "natural" and self-evident, far more work needs to be put into understanding the historical processes that construct categories of belongingness in ways that divide and structure social relations between and among people.

Recommendation:

Care needs to be taken in developing anti-racism projects to ensure that the specific histories and experiences of racialised communities are recognised, so that categories of exclusion are not reproduced.

The two racialised community-based women's organisations included in the study were struggling to remain viable. These two organisations are not comparable to mainstream women's organisations, as they are more complex and multi-layered than mono-cultural mainstream women's organisations. More work and resources need to be invested in the development of community-based voluntary associations for racialised women that remain a muted voice in Canadian democratic citizenship. Research indicates that multicultural women's organisations are faced with challenges and barriers that do not face mainstream monocultural, mono-lingual women's groups and these challenges must be accommodated through different organisational processes and structures (see Lee, 1995). Moreover, if voluntary immigrant women's voices are to be heard in non-profit, voluntary sector coalitions working on social justice and equality issues, they must be assisted to organise and articulate their interests.

Recommendation:

Invest more work and resources in the development of a broad range of community-based voluntary associations for racialised women, including ethno/linguistic-specific groups.

A number of unfunded, grassroots women's groups are meeting outside the provincial women's organisation. Respondents reported that they saw the provincial women's organisation as unable to represent their voices. Hence, these groups are self-organising and cooperating to bring their own issues into focus. Membership in the provincial organisation is a question, however, that is still open for discussion. The provincial women's organisation is perceived to be remote, its leadership distant, too professional and not representative of grassroots women. The provincial organisation, since its inception, has drawn its leadership from a few ethnic communities. Notwithstanding individual women's commitment and leadership abilities, the nature of the provincial women's organisation leadership has left an impression that the organisation is not representative of all immigrant, refugee and visible minority women. Its present board, for example, lacks representation from many of the Asian communities that constitute the largest immigrant populations in the province.

These perceptions of the provincial immigrant, refugee and visible minority women's organisation are a reflection of the challenges that the organisation faces in seeking to represent the voices of immigrant, refugee and visible minority women province-wide. The organisation faces structural and organisational difficulties that hinder its ability to function effectively as an advocacy group. For example, despite its mandate for advocacy and representation, only representatives of organisations can be full members. Individuals may only hold associate, non-voting membership. Most organisational members are drawn from the settlement sector, and this type of mediated membership results in immigrant women lacking a direct voice and means of influencing organisational policies. In its consumer advocacy role, BCIVMW is disadvantaged in speaking out about certain issues facing immigrant and refugee women as clients and workers because it may be speaking against one of its member organisations. This organisation-based type of membership structure is a double-edged sword. Given the absence of long-term funding for organising community-based racialised women's groups throughout the province, member representation from agency sponsored immigrant women's support groups offers BCIVMW a working, but flawed province-wide mechanism for representation.

As mentioned elsewhere in the report, the lack of a framework that enables the membership to understand their commonality in social positioning through racism, sexism and classism, has led to divisions over the central purpose of the organisation. Sometimes these divisions have occurred along the axes of multicultural versus anti-racism versus cultural celebration, service provision versus political activism and advocacy, and immigrant/refugee versus visible minority.

Recommendation:

Federal and provincial departments concerned with women's equality should be encouraged to take more responsibility and to work collabouratively with MRMI to address racialised women's issues in a broad range of policy contexts.

The provincial organisation recognises that structural problems exist. It is a top-down hierarchy, where most decisions are left to the President who is often overwhelmed by the amount of work needed to keep the organisation afloat. It meets only once or twice a year; it is underfunded, understaffed and under-resourced; and, it does not have an appropriate organisational structure to encourage the independent voices of rural-based women.

Recommendation:

Racialised women's organisations throughout the province should collaborate in establishing an action plan of renewal and increased grassroots representation. Some necessary steps include:

a) taking greater ownership of provincial organisations;
b) voicing issues to MRMI and other relevant governmental departments; and,
c) negotiating flexibility in funding for diverse models of organising that emerge around issues that are based on local women's needs and concerns, and are developed from the ground up.

Gendering Immigration and Multicultural Policy

Immigration policy is deeply gendered, treating women as dependents of men and assuming that the nuclear North American family unit of father, dependent mother and children is the primary social unit of immigrant populations. Although Statistics Canada data indicates that 59 per cent of Family Class immigrants are women, and that Asian women are a growing group of Independent Class immigrants, most settlement services are designed to assist the male head of household with economic integration, while women are assisted in their mothering role and in social integration. Given that the points system for selecting suitable immigrants is based on level of education, work experience, occupation and economic resources, it is likely that women and men have equivalent education and professional qualifications. In addition, the increasing necessity for both husband and wife to enter the Canadian labour force is ignored by the current policy. It is highly likely that after the initial period of adjustment, most women will enter the paid labour force. The sponsorship system also reinforces women's dependent relationship to the dominant male. Thus, there is a systemic gender bias in immigration policy that operates throughout the initial decision to emigrate, the process of settlement, and ultimately the ongoing process of integration.

Recommendation:

With support of MRMI, federal and provincial women's ministries, immigrant women's umbrella organisations should map out specific social change strategies targeting specific legislative, policy changes that would address the full range of settlement/integration barriers faced by racialised women.

MRMI FUNDING POLICIES

Respondents were asked to comment on the Community Liaison Division's funding policies, programs and project officers' relations with the field. They were also asked what they would like to see MRMI undertake in the future and how CLD could support their work. In general, respondents reported positive relationships with CLD. There were especially positive comments about the Ministry's overall philosophy and values, and about program officers' relationships with staff at sponsoring agencies.

Respondents also commented on the overall funding environment in which their work was situated. It was generally felt that the immigration and multiculturalism sector was underfunded compared to other government programs. This chronic underfunding has had a negative impact on the growth of the sector as a whole.

In terms of specific impacts on the needs and issues faced by racialised women, respondents noted that multicultural programs for racialised women were no one government department's core program area, and that there were many unmet and unrecognized needs. Respondents generally recommended further investment in project development for racialised women beyond the provision of direct settlement services.

CLD's Programs, Policies and Practices

In general, respondents were very positive with MRMI's commitment to consultation and flexibility. Respondents consistently reported that, in comparison to other funders, MRMI is one of the best funders to work with because of the openness and willingness of staff to work with a variety groups. They especially appreciated CLD staff's willingness to help broker funding for projects that MRMI staff thought were important, but could not fund for various reasons. Respondents spoke favourably about the CLD's management style and felt the Division's leadership permitted a positive relationship between program officers and community managers. Respondents appreciated the fact that many program officers had previously worked on "the other side" and had an understanding of how community-based programs operated. CLD staff were not seen as bureaucrats administering programs without a personal commitment to or understanding of the challenges in doing anti-racism, multiculturalism and immigrant and refugee settlement work at the community level.

Many respondents also felt that it was important to maintain the distinction between Immigration Settlement programs and Anti-racism and Multiculturalism programs. In their minds, immigration settlement programs focus more on providing individual direct settlement assistance while the anti-racism and multiculturalism program focus more on community and institutional change. Both were described as necessary to achieve the goal of integration. However, some respondents expressed the view that the two funding programs overlapped and were more or less the same. This perception indicates some confusion over the administrative borders between the two funding programs, and may indicate a need for a much clearer distinction between the two programs at the community level and in grants adjudication, to ensure that multiculturalism and anti-racism are not collapsed into immigration and settlement work, although the two are often hard to separate.

Recommendation:

MRMI should ensure that there is administrative clarity in the two funding programs: anti-racism and multiculturalism, and immigrant settlement and integration.

Since an erroneous conflation between immigration, multiculturalism and racism already exists in the minds of the general public, the Community Liaison Division must ensure that funding is provided to support women's groups who take up the issue of anti-racism and multiculturalism in a wide variety of contexts, not only those linked to immigration and settlement concerns.

Recommendation:

MRMI and other government departments with women's programs should ensure that funding is provided to support women's groups who do work around anti-racism and multiculturalism in a wide variety of contexts, not only those linked to immigration and settlement concerns.

Overall Funding Context of the Immigration and Multiculturalism Sector

Multi vs. One year Funding Cycles

Although one of the most common complaints from the majority of respondents was the lack of multi-year funding, which they felt seriously hindered the growth and development of the sector, there are contrasting opinions on the merits of multi vs. single year funding cycles. One large agency reported that, given the present uncertain funding climate, annual funding allowed more flexibility, as multi-year, three-year funding made it more difficult to respond to new and emerging needs. On the other hand, another large agency with a multi-million dollar budget expressed frustration and exasperation that every one of their current programs was on a one year funding cycle and that reporting criteria, formats and application deadlines placed a huge drain on precious staff time.

Recommendation:

MRMI should develop a wider range of funding cycles, including multi-year funding.

Patchwork Funding

Some programs more than others are impacted by uncertain funding. Community-based programs may have as many as five different funders, each requiring different reporting criteria and schedules, while other programs, such as those in the employment and training area, had only one funder. Patchwork funding and administrative costs associated with applying and administering projects were seen as wasteful and time consuming. In addition, there is regional and locational discrepancy in the availability of funding. In the lower mainland region, for example, unequal funding opportunities arise since the Vancouver-based groups are able to access community development projects sponsored by City of Vancouver funding pool that does provide multi-year, ongoing funding for ethno-specific community-based women's groups, whereas elsewhere in the region and in the province, this funding is not available.

Recommendation:

MRMI should provide multi-year funding for women's community development type projects in high priority immigrant communities, especially those outside of Vancouver.

MRMI should collaborate with other funders to harmonise project application and reporting criteria and schedules.

Chronic Underfunding

As noted elsewhere in this report, the chronic underfunding of this sector is made possible because of its reliance on women's unpaid and low cost labour and a belief in women's traditional role in providing care and support. An underlying assumption that adjustment, settlement and support work is "women's work" helps to produce a general acceptance of this sector as racialised and feminised. According to some CLD project staff, community-based anti-racism and multiculturalism work also seems to be undertaken primarily by women's organisations in smaller communities, since these organisations appear more willing to recognise racism as a system of inequality that intersects with sexism and patriarchy. However, as one knowledgeable individual with a long history of community organising (now working with the government) stated,

> *I don't think we [the government] have put that much effort into organizing. I wouldn't say that we have tried very hard and we have failed. I don't think that there has been that much effort [by the government]. There has been some funds given, there has been certain, at a national and provincial level a handful of women, but not in the real organizing way. I don't think we've done it. And that has to happen and we are looking at a long term sort of thing. If we do it at the local level, the women at the local level will gather together and they will promote their own issues. I don't think we have done so much.*
>
> Source Card ID: 00023

Chronic underfunding and an underlying altruism has meant that not only are wages low, but women who have worked for these agencies for many years do not receive the benefits of other government employees working in the sector. One executive director mentioned that RRSP and employer contributions to pension plans are very low or do not generally exist. She asked if agencies in general are contributing to the poverty of women workers when they reach 50 or 60 years of age.

Falling Between the Cracks

"Immigrant women's programs are no one's core program," stated one respondent. Immigrant women's projects, submitted by multi-service settlement agencies, are frequently ineligible for federal and provincial government women's funding programs because these programs are intended to support women's groups. Immigrant and multiculturalism focused agencies tend not to view women and women's issues as their primary concern. Long-term community development projects for ethno-sepecific women are not funded by federal and provincial programs under existing criteria because funding is limited to two years or less, or because ethno-specific projects are not supported under present guidelines.

Funding Recommendations:

A funding priority or separate program stream should be established specifically to support the development of civic participation of racialised women through community development approaches. This program stream could be jointly funded with the Ministry of Women's Equality.

MRMI funding programs should not discourage coalitions of racialised women on the basis of pre-existing and assumed categories, such as, "immigrant", "refugee" and "visible minority" women, or require that coalitions be multi-ethnic.

MRMI should support a broader range of forms of racialised women organising and support programs that help women to achieve their full capacities in their civic, career, as well as in their domestic roles.

MRMI, in consultation with community partners, should develop a set of guidelines and a protocol for partnerships that equalises power differences in decision-making, ownership of projects, and the division of funds.

The Ministry should ensure that transfer of immigration settlement responsibilities under the Settlement Renewal Program should address, as a top priority, the effects of chronic underfunding, cutbacks, patchwork funding, devolution and privatisation on racialised women as clients, volunteers and workers. It should ensure that, at the minimum, a *common upgraded pay scale with benefits should be a priority, and that agencies be required to implement employment equity measures that are targeted to racialised women.*

The CLD should consider developing a comprehensive gender sensitive policy framework to coordinate and establish specific program outcomes for women in anti-racism, multiculturalism and integration work with other Ministries having a mandate to serve racialised women as a priority target group.

Specific government program areas that need to be involved in developing such a policy framework include language training, employment, health, education and training, civic and citizenship participation, and small business development. Research indicates that these are key areas to be considered when addressing racialised women's subordinated status in society. At present, the lack of a comprehensive policy and coordination among numerous funding bodies and Ministries has resulted in overall outcomes that are dispersed and narrowly targeted to a few areas, such as violence and family support programs.

Devolution, Cutbacks and Intensification

These findings raise questions about how MRMI will respond in both anti-racism and multiculturalism and immigrant settlement and integration program areas in light of the dismantling of the social safety net due to cutbacks in provincial and federal budgets.[4] Devolution of responsibility has injected funds into the sector; however, the overall fiscal climate in government funding to social, health and education sectors is poor. More services are being downloaded to the private sector. There is a ripple effect down the line as funding to mainstream agencies is reduced. Given the chronic underfunding of the immigrant services and anti-racism, multiculturalism sector, and its inability to absorb even more reductions, there will be an intensification of volunteer and low-paid labour, with the burden for shouldering these cuts falling mainly on immigrant and visible minority women. In addition, although the needs are growing, services in the sector are not. One respondent stated that,

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[4] Two recent studies by Creese (1999) in Vancouver and Mwarigha (1997) in Toronto document the effects of cutbacks, devolution and amalgamation on immigrant services. Mwarigha (1997) notes that cutbacks, privatization and devolution introduced by both Provincial and Federal governments have had negative impacts including 1) governments withdrawing from direct service provisions as much as possible, 2) reducing or eliminating grants and other discretionary programs to community based organisations, especially to smaller low income and immigrant serving groups that have little political power, and 3) increasing reliance on competitive market type mechanisms for allocating funds to low cost private providers, or the larger, more mainstream CBOs. Mwarigha recommends that under the current climate, government should ensure that an improved and adequately funded delivery system focus on the immediate and intermediate stages of the settlement process.

> *what it comes down to, you're trying to keep your head afloat and keep the basic services going and so these add-on services, as many mainstream organisations call them, we don't want them to come and go, we want them to become an integral part of service delivery, the continuum of services, here, but with the constant expansion and contraction of dollars, I don't know how that will become the focus. Everybody is not as lucky as us, to identify a niche area and go off make a million six in fees for service, so I guess my recommendations to MRMI or any government is to really take a look at how the needs are growing and the dollars are shrinking all round.*
>
> Source Card ID: 0011

Cutbacks and downloading have specific implications for racialised women as a group. At present, the Ministry has not identified priority women's programs for funding even though services to immigrant women always appear as one of the top priorities at each year's community consultations. The Ministry has remained passive, or neutral, with respect to funding goals for racialised women's programs. MRMI funds services and programs that women access, often as the majority client group, but this does not mean that there are programs specifically set up for women. In a climate of cutbacks there is:

- no way of measuring the loss of services to women as a priority target group;
- no way of ensuring that programs and projects targeted to women will continue to be forwarded for funding as a priority when agencies look at program cuts to balance budgets; and
- no systematic way of supporting innovative community development programs aimed at ethno-specific women in their communities, since articulation of "needs" and "services" are not specified in advance, but emerge out of the process of community development.

Clearly the unknown effects on women is an aspect of the shrinking social safety net that requires attention and dialogue with community groups, particularly with racialised women.

Recommendation:

MRMI should establish specific program goals for racialised women's projects with clearly defined targets and desired outcomes through action-oriented consultations with a broad range of groups and individuals working with racialised women. The Ministry of Women's Equality should also be involved in supporting and funding these processes.

Strategies for Dealing with Funding Pressures in the Sector

Organizations in the study responded to the present funding environment in a number of different ways. Some of the strategies identified to cope with inadequate and uncertain funding include the following:

- be conscious of making decisions based on funding for example, favoring better funded, better staffed programs;
- be clear that the organization's central mission, mandate and target group are followed at all levels of organizational decision making;
- build a philosophy of sharing resources within the organization;
- develop a system of internal subsidization to keep core, needed programs and newly established programs viable when funding is not available;
- develop community partnerships to deliver needed programs and services by leveraging and accessing funding that may not normally be available, and to access space and target groups that would not normally go to the organisation's location;
- develop a team approach to program design and implementation;
- educate funders and bring them together at one table to promote greater understanding of the program and the needs; and,
- attend to the impact of unstable funding on staff as individuals with families to support and personal life goals they wish to achieve.

The absence of an explicit gender impact analysis in the above strategies needs to be noted.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The study noted the importance of women's work and women's roles in immigrant integration, as consumers of services, as service providers and as a key factor in building a multicultural society.

Direct, indirect and contradictory outcomes arising out of selected projects were identified and a preliminary set of "Best Practices" for immigrant women support group programs was also identified.

A literature review of selected policy-related research on specific groups of racialised women revealed the research base to be sparse, prompting a recommendation that more research collaboration needs to be organized and more women-centered research undertaken. Key concepts of racialisation, feminisation and intersectionality were introduced to frame the analysis of research findings.

This study demonstrates the importance of integrating a race and gender sensitive framework in all aspects of the immigrant settlement and integration and anti-racism and multiculturalism sector. The consequences of a lack of gender awareness were noted in several areas including: program outcomes; funding and administrative policies and practices; working conditions; lack of empowerment of racialised women; and in shaping the structure of the sector as a whole.

Recommendations for policy and program consideration were addressed to the sector as a whole, specific sponsoring organisations and agencies, MRMI and racialised women's voluntary associations, and other government departments. These recommendations are summarised and listed below.

Summary of Recommendations

1. Research

Given the lack of policy oriented research related to programs for immigrant, refugee and visible minority women in immigrant settlement and integration and multiculturalism, it is recommended that MRMI:

- Support and promote the establishment of research partnerships among women-centred academic and community-based researchers, policy makers, community based organizations and service consumers to help establish research needs and priorities for action.

- Ensure an intersectional gender, race, class, sexuality and language sensitive analytical framework is incorporated into all aspects of the Ministry's policy processes.

- Ensure that further research into qualitative outcome measures include racialised women clients and consumers as well as service providers.

- Extend the Ervin (1994) study on indicators after incorporating gender and the voices of clients into the research framework.

- Conduct further research and discussion with all stakeholders around the uneasy fit between "technical" outcomes for program design and policy improvement, and "advocacy" outcomes for social change.

- Conduct research and education on how programs and policies contribute to a conservative and narrow domestic view of immigrant women in their roles as wives, mothers and daughters to expose biases that are counter to the stated goals of the Ministry.

- Conduct research and education on anti-racist feminism to encourage mainstream women's organizations to include minority women in their action plans.

- Widen and support the scope of policy-oriented and analytical research among women-centered researchers, community advocates and policy makers.

- Train community-based researchers through participatory action research projects.

2. *Performance Measures and Outcomes*

To facilitate the systematic identification of direct, indirect and contradictory outcomes at the institutional and community levels,

It is recommended that sponsoring organisations:

- Document qualitatively and quantitatively, the benchmark conditions in a targeted community at the time a project is conceptualised. Qualitative outcome statements can later be evaluated against these benchmarks.

- Identify and specify project outcomes in project planning and design.

- Specify in project applications intended outcomes at different levels if these can be identified in advance. In community development projects, outcomes may be stated in procedural statements as well as in performance statements. For example, outcome statement may include target dates for the achievement of outcomes; identify of stages or phases in which desired outcomes are expected to be achieved; allow for needs awareness and the development of a collective consciousness of "community" to be recognised as legitimate outcomes; and, encourage program sponsors to articulate outcomes that go beyond individualised service-based statements.

- Provide concrete data to support claims at each level of program outcome (individual, program, organisational and community).

- In service-type projects, identify contradictory outcomes uncovered in the course of implementing the project and what, if anything was done to resolve the contradictory outcomes in project reports.

- In advocacy projects, specify the legislative or policy change that is being targeted and the outcomes the project achieved or failed to achieve in project applications and final reports.

It is recommended that MRMI:

- Discuss and clarify the relationship between quantitative and qualitative indicators so that organisations will fully understand the uses to which the information will be put and make clear the relative emphases that the Ministry will place on different types of performance measures.

- Integrate theoretically informed, analytical research into policy driven performance measurement plans, to better integrate and communicate program and organisational level outcomes to the broader community level and to develop broader implications for program outcomes.

- Time is an important factor for community development projects as outcomes evolve over time and this dynamic of emergence and development should be accommodated in MRMI's outcome measurement plan.

3. *Empowerment of Racialised Women in Funded Projects, Programs and Sponsoring Organisations*

It is recommended that MRMI's Community Liaison Division:

- State that the empowerment of immigrant and refugee women is a desired goal in immigrant settlement and anti-racism and multiculturalism programs.

- Establish a separate funding "stream" for intersectional projects addressing needs and concerns of racialised women in immigrant settlement/ integration and multiculturalism and other ministries participate in developing and funding such a stream where goals/targets overlap.

- Develop three and five year targeted program goals with specific desirable outcomes identified through consultation with researchers, community groups, policy makers and racialised women to guide and support cross-sectoral initiatives.

- Require project sponsors to specify, in grant applications and outcome reports, in outcome language, exactly how projects and programs empower racialised women and the specific barriers and challenges that the project addressed and/or uncovered. See recommendations under Section 2.

- Develop alternative models for advocacy work that enable racialised poor women who are members of self-organised groups to be directly represented in social change coalitions. Resources should be provided to support these groups.

4. Governance and Administration in Core Agencies

It is recommended that agencies and sponsoring organisations:

- Receiving Core funding should be asked to report annually on their progress in implementing affirmative action plans for racialised women at all levels of their organisation. A system of external evaluation by peer agencies should be implemented on a three to five year rotational cycle. The integration of a self and peer group evaluation system will help to institutionalize a gender sensitive framework as well as provide mechanisms for the sector as a whole to share information and knowledge around empowerment strategies for racialised women.

- Establish formal policies to promote women in immigrant and multicultural organisations and review their implementation at regular intervals.

- Be more sensitive to contradictory effects in grouping immigrant and refugee women in groups whose members are at different stages of integration and settlement and who may have different English language abilities.

- Encourage agencies to establish systems of tracking women clients and their usage of different services on the bases of multiple identities so that the diversity among women can be tracked and used for program design and evaluation.

- Include MRMI's criteria for implementing affirmative action in governance where an accreditation process exists.

5. Working Conditions in the Immigrant Settlement and Integration Sector

It is recommended that all stakeholders:

- Address the issue of immigrant women workers feelings of disempowerment in the settlement sector. In particular the perceived racial hierarchy in Core-funded agencies should be addressed. Core-funded agencies need to develop an understanding that racism also intersects and transverses relations between people inside and outside the worksite and develop internal anti-racism strategies.

- Acknowledge the inequalities faced by immigrant women who work in this sector. The sector as a whole should work to reduce reliance on unpaid, volunteer labour to deliver core services.

- With leadership from MRMI and CLD, begin to ensure that the immigrant and multicultural sector, as a specific sector of the broader human services delivery system, is adequately staffed by well-trained, supported employees.

- Explore strategies to ensure staff receive adequate compensation and benefits. Immigrant Settlement Renewal Plan transfer dollars could be used to address wage and benefit inequality.

- Collaborate to establish time lines and accountability measures to achieve greater gender and race/ethnic equity in the sector as a whole.

- Collaborate to ensure greater standardization in job descriptions and wages for similar work across the sector. There should be an action plan established to achieve this goal.

- Develop cross-skills training programs for front-line community workers who wish to expand their job skills. This could be a combination of on-the-job training programs, internships, secondments, mentoring, and distance education or short, intensive weekend or evening courses.

- Investigate reasons why immigrant women are not gaining certification and training in human service employment and ESL instruction fields. Involve community colleges and training institutes and professional associations in developing an affirmative action program

It is recommended that BCSIWA:

- Address issues of representation within its structure to ensure that the voices of immigrant women front-line settlement workers are represented and heard in all committees and at all levels of the association. If necessary, funds should be set aside to allow employers' to give release-time to front-line workers to attend meetings.

6. Adopting an Intersectional Gender Framework

It is recommended that the Sector agencies and MRMI:

- Ensure an intersectional gender, race, class, sexuality and language sensitive analytical framework is incorporated into all aspects of the Ministry's policy processes.

- Collaborate to develop an anti-racism strategy for the sector that incorporates broader anti-discrimination issues such as gender, age, ethnicity, physical and mental abilities, language skills, sexuality, and so on.

It is recommended that MRMI:

- Invest resources to develop a broader range of community-based voluntary associations for racialised women, including ethno/linguistic specific groups.

- Inform communities outside of Vancouver that ethno-specific projects for women will be supported.

It is recommended that community-based immigrant and visible minority women's organisations throughout the province:

- Collaborate to establish an action plan of renewal and increased grassroots representation. Some necessary steps would include:
  a) taking greater ownership of provincial organisations for immigrant, refugee and visible minority women;
  b) voicing issues and concerns to MRMI and other affected governmental departments;
  c) insisting on flexibility in funding diverse models of organising emerging around issues that develop from local women's needs and concerns; and,
  d) examining its structure of representation to increase possibilities for direct participation and greater diversity.

- Map out specific social change strategies targeting specific legislative, policy changes that would address barriers faced by racialised women in a broad range of contexts. This initiative would need to be supported by MRMI, federal and provincial women's ministries, and immigrant women's organisations.

7. Funding Policies

It is recommended that MRMI:

- Ensure funding is provided to support women's groups who do work around anti-racism and multiculturalism in a wide variety of contexts, not only those linked to immigration and settlement concerns.

- Develop a wider range of funding cycles, including multi-year funding. Provide multi-year funding for community development type projects with women for high priority communities, especially those outside of Vancouver.

- Collaborate with other funders of the sector to coordinate application and reporting criteria and schedules.

- Establish a funding priority or program should be established specifically to support the development of civic participation of racialised women through community development approaches.

- Develop, in cooperation with other Ministries and funders mandated to serve racialised women as a priority target group, a comprehensive gender sensitive policy framework to coordinate and establish specific program outcomes for women in anti-racism, multiculturalism and integration work.

- Dialogue with community groups, particularly with racialised women, to uncover the impacts that macro-structural forces, the shrinking social safety net and concomitant increases in demands are having on racialised women's lived experiences and immigrant serving agencies.

- Establish specific program goals for racialised women's projects with clearly defined targets and desired outcomes through action-oriented consultations with a broad range of groups and individuals working with racialised women. The Ministry of Women's Equality should also be involved in supporting and funding these processes.

- Ensure that transfer of immigration settlement responsibilities under the Settlement Renewal Program addresses, as a top priority, the effects of chronic underfunding, cutbacks, patchwork funding, devolution and privatization on racialised women as clients, volunteers and workers. It should ensure that employment benefits and salaries are reviewed and agencies implement employment equity measures that are targeted to women.

8. Focus group Recommendations

Representatives from participating organisations met to discuss the report. They made the following recommendations that:

- The report should be widely circulated to the sector, to other provincial ministries and to other levels of government, especially those departments whose mandates relate to the contents of the report, such as, women's ministries, human resources, training, family and children, health, employment and education.

- The report should be presented to the Interministerial Committee on Multiculturalism.

- AMSSA, IICC and BCIVMW be asked to advocate for racialised women's issues to become a policy and research priority in Ministries, Universities, Colleges and training institutes.

- MRMI and MWE cooperate in taking leadership in government to establish a coordinated, holistic approach to promote racialised women's full participation in and contributions to Canadian society.

APPENDIX 1
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Feminisation refers to social processes that undervalue activities, services and goods as "feminine", female or women's work.

Racialisation refers to a concept that moves away from viewing people as belonging to natural or homogenous "races", referring instead to the social construction of "race" as the consequence of historical and cultural processes. Racialisation, as a concept, draws attention to the way that people are classified as different, using different phenotypical, cultural and behavioural markers as signifiers, and then treated as subordinate.

Racialised Women is a term which describes women who have been subject to processes of racialisation. It is used in this report as a more useful alternative to the category "immigrant, refugee and visible minority women."

Intersectionality refers to the complex interactions of race, gender, class, language, sexuality, ability and other structures of inequality in positioning and shaping women's different lived experiences.

APPENDIX 2
CASE PROFILES

The following case profiles were drafted from information provided by respondents during interviews conducted for the study. The profiles include information about the organisational context of the projects, the ways in which immigrant/visible minority/refugee women are included in the governance of sponsoring organisations, information about project budgets and administration, the projects' target groups, main outcomes, strategies the sponsoring organisations developed in order to serve women, and the issues and challenges faced by the organisations in programming for women.

The case profiles provide detailed information about the projects reviewed in the study, and allow the sponsoring organisations to see their work more fully reflected in the report. Respondents reviewed and revised their agency's case profile prior to its inclusion in this report.

ABBOTSFORD COMMUNITY SERVICES

Project/Program Description:

Core Funding, 1998, $34,000:
To support the coordination and management of Multicultural and Immigrant Integration Services Division of ACS, providing the structure within which immigrant serving programs can be effective, connected to each other and to other programs in the province.

CPP (Community Partnership Program), 1996-7, Immigrant and Visible Minority Women's Advocacy Group Project, $6,000:
An Advocacy Group of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women will provide advocacy on the following issues: 1) Immigrant women and health issues; 2) Immigrant senior women and isolation; 3) Employment and training opportunities (and addressing current barriers to these opportunities); 4) Violence and abuse prevention - community outreach and organisation for the prevention of violence against women and children.

Organisational Context:

Abbotsford Community Services (ACS) is a large, comprehensive, multi-service agency, delivering community services such as recycling, legal, family, and multicultural and immigrant integration services. ACS became involved with immigrant communities in the 1970's, first serving Vietnamese refugees, then broadening integration services to other immigrant communities in Abbotsford. The Multicultural and Immigrant Integration Services (MIIS) was established as a formal Division of ACS in 1995 due, in part, to the availability of provincial funding for such services.

Immigrant, Visible Minority and Refugee Women and Governance:

An agency statement on diversity has been adopted by the Board and guides ACS policy, and an Organisational Diversity Team is mandated to direct diversity initiatives at ACS. Candidates are nominated to the Board through a search process. Currently there is one visible minority woman board member at ACS. ACS staff are hired on the basis of merit. Staff undergo diversity training and ACS supports professional development. MIIS Division staff and management are predominantly bilingual, visible minority women, coming from non-dominant cultures.

Budgets and Administration:

Approximately 1% of the agency's total operating budget is designated for services and programs targeting immigrant and visible minority women. The bulk of Core funding from MRMI for the MIIS Division is put toward the salary of Division management for coordination of MIIS programs and services, and development of new program directions and projects. For projects targeting immigrant and visible minority women specifically, BC MRMI has provided short-term, project specific small grants, such as that for the Immigrant and Visible Minority Women's Advocacy Group. Other funders involved in projects for immigrant and visible minority women have been HRDC, the Law Foundation, Women's Equality, Legal Services Society and BC Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour and Status of Women Canada.

Target Group:

ACS MIIS Division provides services to a wide variety of cultural-linguistic minority groups. Programs for immigrant women focus primarily on language and life skills training, domestic violence and self-esteem building, and are not ethno-specific although the majority of clients tend to be from the Indo-Canadian community. In general, MIIS Division programs for women target the full range of minority women who experience social barriers due to culture, language and/or skin colour, and are not exclusive according to immigration status and length of residency in Canada. Anti-racism and multicultural programs for women target visible minority women and immigrant settlement programs are geared toward newcomers.

Main Outcomes:

Core funding from MRMI has increased MIIS Division's program development capabilities and the Division's participation in various fora related to multicultural and immigrant services. The agency has successfully placed Multiculturalism on the agendas of various mainstream associations (e.g., Chamber of Commerce) as well as successfully lobbying for an official statement on Multiculturalism from the City of Abbotsford.

Within immigrant communities, MIIS Division programs have strengthened familial relationships. Support groups for families in crisis have been formed. Women farm workers are coming together to identify their needs and become informed about their rights. Awareness of family violence has increased in immigrant communities, although this has not led to a decrease in such violence. In general, immigrant women are less isolated and more self-confident. Women participating in the Immigrant and Visible Minority Women's Advocacy Group have gone through leadership training and some have gone on to college, moved into jobs that they are happy with or are sitting on volunteer boards in the community.

Strategies:

ACS continues to offer a variety of programs to women from the dominant cultural, and incorporating immigrant women into these programs has required a shift in methodology to address cultural/linguistic differences. Parallel programs concurrently targeting women and men from immigrant communities have also been developed to address domestic violence in these communities, as well as integration.

Programs for immigrant and visible minority women are initiated to address needs expressed by clients, settlement workers and the Immigrant and Visible Minority Women's Group. When a need is determined, MIIS Division designs a program and seeks funding for that program. Funding is the main challenge to implementing any particular program.

The Immigrant and Visible Minority Women's Group at ACS defines their own projects, structure and mandate. The Coordinator hired by ACS for this group was recruited from amongst the group members. The majority of staff at MIIS Division are immigrant and visible minority women and attention is paid to recruiting from non-dominant cultures (by word of mouth, internal job postings, phone calls and fax-outs to relevant groups) for new positions and replacements. Immigrant and visible minority women volunteer at ACS and are active on steering committees. ACS also deliberately recruits immigrant workers for the Recycling Program in order to deliver on-site employment and language skills training.

Issues and Challenges:

Funding priorities often require modification of program design and some programs (e.g., targeting senior immigrant women, some projects arising out of the Immigrant and Visible Minority Women's Group) cannot be implemented due to lack of funder support.

In promoting Multiculturalism, ACS has faced questions from public officials (e.g., MP and MLA) who believe that too much public money is being channeled toward multicultural and immigrant services. Sentiments have been expressed by some members of the public who believe that immigrants are taking away jobs from Canadian citizens.

In offering programs that specifically target immigrant and visible minority women, MIIS Division has faced criticism from some community members who believe that programs should not be gender-specific.

BURNABY FAMILY LIFE INSTITUTE

Project/Program Description:

ISP, 1997-8, ESL Immigrant Outreach Program, $14,000.00
This program proposal is an adaptation of the highly successful PIRS ESL Preschooler Program currently being delivered at several sites in Vancouver. This project delivers 29 weeks of ESL instruction (meeting twice per week) to Spanish speaking women who are isolated, low income and unable to access LINC. A parallel, quality, age appropriate, culturally sensitive child minding program is offered for pre-school aged children. In addition to MRMI funding, BFLI contributed $8,900 from gaming revenue; Van City contributed $5,000 and the Burnaby School District contributed $3,243.

ISP, 1997-8, Immigrant Women's Support Group, $14,434.00
This program provides three X 10 week group education, counseling and support group sessions to multi-lingual immigrant women and their children whose families are struggling with settlement issues, have a desire to integrate into Canadian society and to improve their English language skills. This is an adaptation of the PIRS Lead Program. In addition to MRMI funding, BFLI contributed $1,925 and more than $5,000 in paid staff time.

Organisational Context:

Since 1971, BFLI has been providing a wide variety of community-based programs. With a team of 10 program co-ordinators and 50+ full-time and part-time staff, BFLI delivers more than 100 workshops, conferences, educational, counseling and support services to thousands of families each year. The primary areas of service delivery are: Family Life Education, Pregnancy Outreach Project, Young Parent Programs and Daycare, First Nations Parenting, Community Kitchens, Family Violence Intervention Programs, Pre-employment program for survivors of abuse, Community Action Programs for Children and LINC child care. In the past decade, BFLI has been struggling to meet the increasing demands of changing demographics in Burnaby due to the settlement of thousands of newcomers along the sky-train corridor in south Burnaby and other neighbourhoods where newcomers can afford to rent basement suites or apartments.

Immigrant, Visible Minority & Refugee Women and Governance:

BFLI has benefited significantly from consultation services provided by PIRS for the past 3 years. With their assistance, a community wide needs assessment was undertaken out of which a community-based steering committee was formed to guide the development and implementation of BFLI's programs for immigrant women. Currently staff speak 10 different languages, representing as many nationalities, six First Nations and more than a dozen visible and non-visible minorities. Although the BFLI Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for decision-making, the Board relies on the Steering Committee's expertise and guidance.

Budgets and Administration:

Other BFLI programs for women are funded by the Ministries of Women's Equality, Attorney General, Advanced Education, Training and Technology, Health and Ministry for Children and Families. While funding from MRMI specifically targets immigrant/refugee programs, it is estimated that between 40 to 50% of the agency's entire budget of $1.6 million is providing services to diverse populations. Community Kitchens, Pregnancy Outreach Projects, Baby & me, Moving On (Pre-employment program for abused women), the Young Parent Program & Child care, and LINC child care are examples of programs in which 65 to 100% of participants are immigrant or refugees.

Target Groups:

The ESL/preschool program targets Spanish-speaking immigrant/refugee women with multiple barriers to accessing services. Typically, participants have been living in Canada for less than 4 years, however many women who have not been able to access any services have been here longer. The Immigrant Women's Support Group targets multi-lingual women who are low-income, isolated, & experiencing multiple barriers. Other BFLI programs target pregnant and parenting teens, pregnant immigrant women, single parents, low-income, isolated, low education/literacy, survivors of abuse/violence, families with little social support.

Main Outcomes:

Breaking down social isolation, developing family support systems, increasing parenting skills, English Language skills, building strong relationships within the family and community, increasing access to community services, decreasing effects of trauma and increasing cultural awareness and family self-esteem are typical outcomes identified in evaluation processes. These programs have increased awareness within BFLI of changing demographics in Burnaby and the need to respond more effectively at all levels of the organisation.

Strategies:

BFLI actively pursues community based partnerships with Pacific Immigrant Resources Society, the Burnaby Multicultural Society, the Vancouver & Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services Society and is a founding member of the Immigrant Services Advisory Committee for Burnaby. BFLI has developed strong working relationships with Home School Co-ordinators, Community School Coordinators and other service providers whose mandate is to serve immigrant/refugee families in order to be more responsive in being part of a broad continuum of services in the community.

Issues and Challenges:

Although BFLI has made great strides in recent years, it will take time to meet their goal of being more culturally responsive in all levels of the organisation. The majority of Board members and management still reflect, primarily, the dominant culture; staff with English as a second language experience racism not only from mainstream clients but, sadly, from some mainstream staff members. The majority of staff members who are also immigrant are working in part-time positions in which they are under-employed, considering their skills and experience in their countries of origin. BFLI is constantly being challenged by other community service providers to do more for immigrant/refugee families in a climate of government cutbacks, uncertainty and ever increasing demands on their limited resources.

INTER CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF GREATER VICTORIA

Project/Program Description:

ISP, 1997-8, Immigrant Women's Program, $19,857.00
This project's primary goal is to assist and support immigrant women in becoming more independent citizens in Canadian society. The program is the foundation through which the participants are eventually introduced and referred to other programs and agencies, such as the employment training, vocational programs and English language training. Having the ability and the confidence to network with other resources and people in the community is the identifiable outcome of this project.

Organisational Context:

ICA began as a settlement agency offering assistance programs to refugees and first partnered with a other community agencies to provide programs for immigrant women in 1987. The need for gender-specific programming was identified by the agency's clients of settlement services to bridge gaps in services of mainstream agencies.

Immigrant, Visible Minority and Refugee Women and Governance:

Immigrant women are represented on ICA's Board. Board members are nominated as members of ethno-specific groups and through individual nomination. ICA has made efforts to encourage immigrant women to take on decision-making and leadership roles within the agency. ICA has an anti-harassment policy in the workers' collective agreement.

Budgets and Administration:

Since devolution of immigration integration services to the province, ICA has been funded primarily by MRMI. Small grants for public education around prevention of violence against women and family violence have been received from the Ministry of Women's Equality and the Ministry of Children and Families. ICA has also partnered with and received funding from Capital Regional Health for specific projects.

Target Group:

ICA programs target both newcomers and immigrants who have resided in Canada for a longer period of time. Women's programs target immigrant women of all ages with programs specifically designed for senior women, women with children and youth. The majority of participants in the women's program are between the ages of 30 and 40 years. Specific services offered to women by ICA include: prenatal classes, parenting classes, ESL with child-minding and community development projects. Most services are multi-ethnic; ICA does not provide language/ethno-specific services, although interpreters sometimes accompany women to the women's group or pre-natal classes, etc. When access barriers for a specific group are recognised, ICA develops short-term ethno-specific programs to examine and dismantle these barriers and reach out to these communities.

Main Outcomes:

The immigrant women's drop-in group links immigrant women with mainstream agencies. ICA provides cultural sensitivity training for mainstream organisations and service providers (including schools, transition houses and the Victoria police force) which has resulted in increased multicultural awareness of service providers in Victoria. Multi-ethnic services offered by ICA have increased understanding and strengthened relationships among cultural groups. Exchange of information between the women's group and other groups in Victoria has increased the visibility and participation of immigrant women in communities in Victoria. Women in the catering co-op have developed strong social connections and some have learned new skills.

Strategies:

ICA pays attention to hiring staff with experience in cross-cultural situations, with direct knowledge of immigration and settlement and who speak more than one language. ICA values credentials and experience obtained outside of Canada and/or through volunteering and job-site learning in Canada. ICA screens all staff and volunteers for biases and paternalistic attitudes in order to avoid setting up an "us helping them" dichotomy between staff/volunteers and clients. Staff undergo professional development and cultural awareness training. The majority of ICA's staff are women.

In-house orientation for volunteers includes both an introduction to immigration issues and cultural sensitivity training. Many volunteers have been in Canada for some time, or are second generation. Immigrant women volunteering in the women's program and facilitating the immigrant women's group provide role models for participants and can share their knowledge and experience of immigration and integration.

Program participants are recruited mainly by word-of-mouth and through schools. Recruitment through member groups, print, radio and television media has not been highly successful. Telephoning people whose last names in the phone book indicate their ethnic origins has been a successful outreach strategy for recruiting participants from highly marginalised communities. Offering programs at sites of worship has (in the past) successfully fostered the agency's relationships with specific groups, however funding for such programs has now shifted to multi-cultural programs.

Issues and Challenges:

There is limited public support for the services offered by ICA. Demands placed on the agency to do training with other organisations are great and difficult to meet. Designing programs for immigrant women that are flexible and supportive is difficult when accepted program models have rigid goals geared toward meeting the needs of men. Developing projects to fit funders' criteria exacerbates these challenges. Funders have capped staff pay at a very low level. Short-term project-based funding and a lack of support for partnership development, reduces the possibility of undertaking effective community development work. Potential partner organisations are competing with the agency for funding rather than working collaboratively on projects. Some programs at ICA are well funded and others are run by volunteers and this creates conflicts over allocation of space and resources within the agency.

IMMIGRANT SERVICES SOCIETY OF BC

Project Description:

ARM, 1997-8 $9,055.00; ARM Women's Projects, 1998-8, $16,360.00 Vietnamese Youth Worker - Women at Risk

This project aims to facilitate and initiate activities that encourage and support youth to move away from self-destructive activities and crime, to build self-confidence and to provide the support and guidance necessary for them to become active members of the broader community. ISS will collaborate with the Parks Board Youth Service Team, Trout Lake Community Centre and schools in providing these program activities. Activities will include developing and implementing social, educational, leadership and peer support programs for the participation of primarily, but not exclusively, Vietnamese female youth aged 8-18. The expected outcomes are: Vietnamese women will be given skills and opportunities to become more self-confident and to develop leadership skills which allow them to become increasingly active members of their communities.

BCAMP & ISP, 1998-9, Multicultural Family Support and Advocacy Program, $49,860.00

The program will be a service that helps immigrant, refugee and visible minority communities adjust to Canadian society. The program will provide support, information, public education, advocacy, referrals, workshops, support groups, and a variety of other activities to facilitate the integration of newcomer families and women in particular. The program's focus will be immigrant, refugee and visible minority women and children who are experiencing violence in their lives. The program will work actively with ISS Community Settlement Counselors to provide culturally-sensitive, ethno and language specific services to clients. The program goals will be to educate immigrants, refugees and visible minorities of the laws in Canada; of community agencies and systems; and to assist them in accessing long-term counseling services. Lastly and most importantly the Program will function as a safe and confidential space for immigrants, refugees and visible minorities to obtain resources, receive crisis intervention, and link up with other agencies and services in the community.

Organisational Context:

Incorporated in 1972, ISS provides a wide range of settlement services and programs to Lower Mainland immigrant and refugee communities. ISS has more than 140 paid staff.

Budgets and Administration:

The Vietnamese Youth project also receives funding from the City of Vancouver and in-kind contributions from the Parks Board. The project is run by two staff, one full-time and one part-time, and funding for these positions has been continuous over three years.

The Family Support Program has one full-time coordinator who is responsible for all aspects of the program (counseling, outreach, public education, administration, seeking funding, etc.). The program is funded entirely by MRMI.

Target Group:

The Vietnamese Youth Women at Risk project targets school age Vietnamese girls. The School Board and statistics indicate low levels of integration of Vietnamese youth. Front-line staff at ISS identified needs specific to young Vietnamese women, such as intergenerational conflict, poor attendance in school, some criminal involvement, petty crime, and issues around sexuality and promiscuity.

The Family Support Program targets immigrant and refugee women and their families who are in crisis, at risk of and/or experiencing violence. The program also serves immigrant and refugee men experiencing crises.

Main Outcomes:

The Vietnamese Youth project has established links with parents, provided a support network and role models for young Vietnamese women and increased the participation of the Vietnamese community in special events and services offered by the Trout Lake Community Centre. Vietnamese youth have become involved as advocates in the Civic Youth Strategy for the City of Vancouver. Running the program through the community centre has increased cultural sensitivity and competency of community centre staff.

The Family Support program has provided support, advocacy and counseling for immigrant women and men in crisis. Innovative counseling models specific to working with immigrants and refugees have been developed and used. A self-care program for settlement workers, procedural guidelines for dealing with crises, and network and referral documentation have also resulted from the program.

Strategies:

ISS lobbies with other immigrant serving agencies for the development and provincial endorsement of a "Framework for Defining Cultural Competency" and is working toward developing a cultural competency auditing tool. Strategic alliances between immigrant serving agencies and MRMI are being sought to lobby other ministries to integrate multiculturalism into their mandates.

The Vietnamese Youth project's workers are based at the Trout Lake Community Centre, in a neighbourhood with a large population of Vietnamese. The workers outreach to youth at schools in the neighbourhood and at the same time establish trust with parents/guardians to encourage them to allow their daughters to participate in the programs. Community volunteers are identified through outreach and assist in delivering tutoring services. Attention is paid to ensuring that if the program is moved or cut, that the community centre will continue to provide services to the Vietnamese population. Staff are hired from the Vietnamese community and Vietnamese youth participate in the hiring process. Staff for the project were recruited through the Vietnamese media and service providers network.

The Family Support Program outreaches to clients of other ISS programs by introducing the services available through the program. Counseling models have been adapted to suit the particular needs of immigrant and refugee women. For example, providing support often includes direct advocacy to address racism, sexism, poverty and homophobia and other forms of systemic discrimination that impact on clients. In-direct advocacy through participation in inter-agency fora has also been undertaken in order to increase the competency of mainstream organisations in providing services to immigrant and refugee women.

Issues and Challenges:

Short-term funding reduces the stability of programs and increases administrative costs. Programs for immigrant/refugee women often do not fit the funding criteria of other relevant provincial ministries (such as the Ministry of Children and Families and the Ministry of Women's Equality). Divisions between immigrant serving and mainstream agencies are exacerbated by the funding process.

Vietnamese youth travel from other parts of the city to access services at the community centre because of a lack of services in their own neighbourhoods. Workers are being called on for crisis intervention work in other parts of the city, substantially increasing their workload. Negative stereotypes about Vietnamese involvement in criminal gangs has meant that the staff are constantly confronting racism. Staff based outside of ISS are isolated and sometimes feel unsupported in their work.

Demands on the Family Support program are high, resources are few, and support within ISS for the program are minimal. Advocacy and support are time-consuming, and because of the high volume of clients and limited staff, the program does not fulfill all of the needs of the clients. Clients resist being referred out to mainstream agencies because often these agencies do not provide appropriate services. It is difficult to find culturally appropriate therapists to provide long-term counseling in cases of extreme trauma and the Family Support Program cannot provide such support. There is a high turnover of counselors in the program. The apolitical stance of immigrant serving agencies promotes family values and discourages direct advocacy work with the clients.

IMMIGRANT AND VISIBLE MINORITY WOMEN OF BC

Project/Program Description:

Core Funding, 1997-8, $15,000.00 and CPP, 1997-8, $2,000.00
The organisation promotes a better and equitable society for immigrant and minority women by developing awareness of political, social, educational and economic policies and increasing their active participation in Canadian society, providing opportunity for mutual assistance through networking and increasing women's accessibility to resources, advocating change and educating for skill development.

Organisational Context:

IVMW, BC is an umbrella agency of 44 immigrant women's groups from 7 rural and urban regions in British Columbia. The organisation assists its members in advocating for empowerment of immigrant and visible minority women through leadership training and networking opportunities for immigrant, refugee and visible minority women.

Immigrant, Visible Minority and Refugee Women and Governance:

The Board consists of approximately 25 women representatives of immigrant women's and immigrant serving organisations and has approximately 50 voting members all of whom are immigrant and visible minority women.

Budgets and Administration:

IVMW has received Core funding since its inception (in 1992). IVMW also receives project funding from the Human Rights Commission and the United Way as well as generating other funds from gaming and membership contributions. The 1997 MRMI Core funding contributed toward operational expenses of the organisation such as staff salaries, office expenses, meetings and travel, as well as undertaking an organisational review process. The MRMI CPP funding helped the organisation to develop a policies and procedures manual for organisational governance.

Target Group:

IVMW primarily serves immigrant and visible minority women of all cultural groups throughout the province, and strives particularly to give a voice to and advocate on behalf of women who are unable to articulate their needs because of cultural and language barriers or because they lack a platform to do so in their own (for example, rural) communities.

Main Outcomes:

The organisational review process resulted in the development of: policies and procedures, a model of governance for the organisation and improved trust and communication among Board members. IVMW participates in a variety of consultative fora and organises activities to advocate and lobby for immigrant women, for example: hosting human rights workshops in the seven regions of British Columbia, launching a video on family violence, participating in the Immigration Legislative Review process, the MRMI Round table and the APEC People's Summit.

Strategies:

IVMW members meet in Vancouver bi-annually. Leadership and skill building training (eg., proposal writing) is provided at these meetings. Members then take these skills back to their organisations and carry out community development work appropriate to the communities of women that they represent.

Issues and Challenges:

Conflicts and tensions within IVMW are a natural result of doing advocacy work with a diverse membership. Tensions exist between immigrant women (whose priority is integration and settlement issues) and non-immigrant, visible minority women (whose priority is anti-racism work). Funders expect the organisation to display a type of cohesion that is not possible at this stage of political organisation, and to adopt mainstream organisational models that may not suit the needs of members. Limited funding for programs for immigrant women who have moved beyond the settlement stage increase these tensions. Lack of sufficient funding to support the mandate of the organisation, lack of recognition of the challenges of rural-based community development with isolated immigrant women by funders are ongoing challenges.

MOSAIC

Project/Program Description:

ARM, 1997-8, Working Group on Poverty, $16,858.00
The Working Group On Poverty is a collective of 23 community partners that represent immigrant and refugee serving organisations, City, Federal and Provincial governments, business, banking, labour, anti-poverty groups, education, health and clients. The Working Group was established to identify and define common issues related to poverty and define a strategy to address those issues. The Group identified five models for development and have identified that the work on behalf of the Group must be coordinated. The Working Group will define the vision of the collective, but the work will be labour intensive and must be facilitated by a coordinator. The Coordinator would be responsible for the facilitation and coordination of meetings, connect with community partners, develop 1 or 2 of the models, provide public education to counter "poor bashing" and the backlash against poor immigrant communities, community outreach and identify government policies that are impacting poverty levels at the local, provincial and federal levels. The coordinator will follow through on an action plan laid out by the Steering committee of the Working Group. The Steering Committee will consist of members of the Working group, clients from the communities MOSAIC services and mainstream communities.

Organisational Context:

MOSAIC is a large, multi-service, settlement agency. In addition to settlement services, MOSAIC advocates on behalf of clients and communities as well as providing fee for service interpretation to individual clients and interpretation and translation services to businesses. MOSAIC began programming specifically for women approximately six years ago. The need for a working group to address issues of poverty in communities of immigrants and refugees was identified by the agency's front-line staff. The WGOP is coordinated by and located at MOSAIC, but is an otherwise independent group.

Budgets and Administration:

Approximately 20% of MOSAIC's annual budget (of approximately $5 million) is directed toward programming for women. Women's programs at MOSAIC receive funding from Ministry of Children and Families, Attorney General, Regional Health Board, Canadian Heritage and Health Canada. In addition to funding from MRMI, the Working Group on Poverty is funded by the United Way, Vancouver Foundation and the Law Foundation. Money generated from fee for service and commercial translation business at MOSAIC increases the organisations ability to manage shifts in funding priorities and provide continuous services to clients when funding for programs is cut.

Target Group:

Primarily, programs for immigrant/refugee women at MOSAIC focus on women within the context of the family. Programs reach out to women who are isolated and at home with pre-school aged children.

The WGOP works in collaboration with, lobbies and educates legislators and policy makers on issues of poverty in immigrant/refugee communities.

Main Outcomes:

Women's programs at MOSAIC foster friendships among immigrant/refugee women, enhance parenting skills, provide knowledge about health issues, increase English language skills, reduce women's isolation, strengthen family relationships, and increase women's participation in community events and activities.

The WGOP has lobbied successfully for legislative change, produced studies on poverty in immigrant and refugee communities, participated in public fora, social planning and legislative review processes.

Strategies:

To increase participation in women's programs, MOSAIC offers bus tickets, child minding and refreshments and holds the programs at an accessible location. Participants are recruited through word of mouth, personal contacts through the church or community organisations and individually contacting women by telephone.

A shift from a service delivery model to a community development model has increased the self-esteem of participants and fostered a sense of ownership over women's projects at MOSAIC. MOSAIC provides physical space and equipment for self-forming groups to meet and organise. Women are involved in generating issues to be addressed, identifying needs to be met by the program and in taking care of the details of the program, such as contacting resource persons, contacting each other about meetings, buying refreshments and doing other volunteer work around the program.

Attention is paid to designing projects that sustain the interest of the women, without creating a dependency on the organisation. Groups composed partly of newcomers and partly of women who have been involved for some time helps to ensure that women move smoothly through the project. Project workers maintain personal contact with each of the group members, reaching out to new participants and encouraging others to move beyond the group, to enable a workable group composition.

In staffing, attention is paid to promoting from within and hiring graduates from MOSAIC's programs. MOSAIC has a Human Resources policy that establishes advancement from within as a hiring priority.

In establishing the WGOP, MOSAIC sought like-minded individuals and representatives from a broad range of organisations concerned with issues of poverty. The group developed a collaborative model of functioning, based on mutual respect, transparency and understanding of member's organisational contexts.

Issues and Challenges:

Moving from the point where a need is identified through to offering a program to meet that need is a long and sometimes frustrating process. Funders' priorities sometimes do not match well with the needs identified by the clients/communities. Funders sometimes do not understand that community development cannot be outcomes driven and that establishing the trust and interest of women in a program is a long process.

Rapidly changing and growing needs in communities due to changes in demographics and the dismantling of the social safety net increase demands on the organisation. The organisation has difficulty meeting these demands due to constant shifts in funding priorities and substantial funding cuts.

MULTICULTURAL FAMILY CENTRE

Project/Program Description:

ARM, Women's Projects, African Women and Children's Project 2, 1997-8, $10,000.00
The overall goal of this project is to design strategies to alleviate barriers experienced by women of African descent in their efforts to access services and institutions. Attention will be given to providing opportunities for the women and children to acquire knowledge and understanding of social systems, services and programs purportedly available to all residents of BC. This will be achieved through direct involvement in the planning and implementation of specific strategies that respond to the needs identified by the women themselves. Networking and establishing helpful community connections and partnerships will be emphasized.

Organisational Context:

The Multicultural Family Centre (MFC) is located at REACH, a community health centre which provides medical and dental care, counseling, and health education programs in the culturally diverse Grandview Woodlands area. The MFC was established in 1991 as part of a demonstration project, *The Linking Project,* funded by Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada (now Canadian Heritage). The primary goal was to improve access to mainstream services for groups known to be underserved. The Principal Investigator was a university professor with an immigrant background and expertise in the area of cross-cultural health and social services. External evaluations conducted in 1992 and 1994 indicated that the MFC had established itself as a valuable resource; the MFC was found to be meeting its primary goal. Based on these evaluations, the MFC established its own advisory bodies, and it has continued to develop unique approaches that serve immigrants and refugees facing various problems, as defined by the communities themselves. Currently, the MFC operates, in effect, as an autonomous entity, offering programs to Vietnamese and Latin American clientele, as well as to people of African descent in Vancouver.

African Women and Children's Program:

At the request of the African community, a women's group was formed at the MFC to respond to community-identified concerns affecting African women, including social isolation, discrimination, lack of knowledge about, and access to, existing services for themselves and for their families.

The Women's Group's request for their children to receive support in schools led to the development of the tutoring component to the project, including anti-racism strategies such as cultural identity and self-esteem. In addition, a pilot program in one school provided opportunities for elementary school students of varied backgrounds to learn about Africa and contributions of people of African descent. A parents' forum was also initiated when the Women's Group described a need for their spouses to be involved in the agency as well.

Immigrant, Visible Minority and Refugee Women and Governance:

Advisory committees from each of the communities serve to guide the work of the MFC. The MFC's African Advisory Committee consists of a number of representatives (men and women) from the African community, including community workers, professionals, and members-at-large from the community. Suggestions for Advisory Committee membership are generated by the community, and are based on active community involvement, diversity of regional background, and other relevant characteristics. This committee meets several times per year with the MFC directors and staff to review programs and to ensure their continued relevance. It also affords an opportunity to coordinate MFC activities with those of other agencies/institutions serving the African community, and provides up-to-date information on community needs. The MFC does not have its own Board of Directors, but, as a partner of REACH, is governed by the REACH Board. At the last AGM, a woman from the African community, who has been a long-term MFC volunteer, was elected to the REACH Board; her name had been put forward by the MFC at the request of the REACH Executive Director.

Budgets and Administration:

The MFC was initially funded by a grant from Canadian Heritage. The African Women and Children's project received startup funding from the Vancouver Foundation, and is currently funded through a number of sources, primarily the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board. All of the programs offered through the project are free to members of the community.

Target Group:

The project targets all women and children who describe themselves as being of African descent, including those born outside of Africa. The vast majority of participants in the project are immigrants and refugees from approximately 28 African nations and their children. Children participating in the program range in age from pre-school to grade 12.

Main Outcomes:

Participants are comfortable at the centre, trust each other and the staff, and indicate that they are receiving reliable and useful assistance and information. Supportive relationships between participants extending beyond the agency have developed. Children have brought information and pride about their African heritage into the schools and parents have received assistance in participating in their children's education and dealing with problems that arise at schools. Families in crisis receive assistance. Leadership potential is recognised and actively encouraged. An ongoing discussion about what it means to be of African descent and living in Canada has been fostered. Increased access to health services for the target group, and increased cross-cultural awareness and skills of health service providers, have also resulted from the project.

Strategies:

The MFC develops projects in collaboration with self-defined communities. The agency follows a participatory community development model with all of its projects. The African Women and Children's project was developed following community outreach and consultation concerning needs and priorities. Ownership of the project belongs to the participants. Expertise and skills within the group are utilised. Evaluation is mainly done formally through focus groups and informally through conversations with participants. Written evaluations and quantitative approaches are time-consuming and have not been as successful in generating comprehensive and reliable feedback about the project. Evaluation methods are developed participatively and projects are terminated when the group itself determines that the goals have been met and there are no longer the same needs within the community. The funding process is made transparent to the groups so that everyone understands when and why resources are not available for a particular program. Project staff and volunteers are drawn from the community that the project seeks to serve. When a project, such as the African Women and Children's project, targets people from a variety of ethnic/national backgrounds, efforts are made to hire staff from more than one nation. Staff are highly trained in facilitation skills, the project's methodology and conflict resolution. Volunteers are also trained in, and have experience of, the issues confronting the project participants. The staff meet regularly to share information that they have learned in order to continuously improve the cultural appropriateness of the agency's work.

Issues and Challenges:

It is often assumed that the African community is homogeneous, and unity about priorities within this very diverse community may be a criteria for funding. This has resulted in a shortage of resources to accommodate the needs identified by the MFC group itself. There is a continuing need for additional staff, space and resources to provide the types of programs suitable to the communities that access the agency. Short-term funding is detrimental to program development and may, on occasion, lead to some anxiety on the part of staff, despite their high levels of commitment and enthusiasm. Significant amounts of time and energy are spent seeking funding and reporting to funders because of short funding cycles. For this reason, core funding is viewed as highly desirable.

NORTH SHORE MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Project/Program Description:

CPP, 1996-7, Immigrant Women's Access to Mainstream Programming, $21,3000.00
A coordinator will be hired to assess the present accessibility to immigrant women of mainstream programming for women on the North Shore, and of some gender neutral programming that would be of interest to women. Working with the Steering Committee composed of representatives from community agencies, the coordinator will work with individual agencies to find ways to make the regular programming more accessible and/or assist the agencies to develop programming specifically for immigrant women within the mandate of the mainstream agency concerned. A calendar of events and programs that are accessible will be prepared monthly and disseminated. In addition to this action research, the coordinator will bring together other studies on barriers to accessibility within individual agencies, formal or informal, and compile a report with recommendations for the future.

ARM, 1997-8, Immigrant/Refugee Women's Access to Community Programming, $22,000.00
The goal of Phase Two is to target and promote the participation in the ACCESS Project of key North Shore services which did not participate in Phase One. Working with a Steering Committee composed of representatives from community agencies, the coordinator will work with targeted agencies and continue to work with the five agencies which participated in Phase One in order to : develop opportunities and processes for collaboration on shared concerns (interpretation/translation, creating a referral network, volunteer coordination, specific service skills development); and work individually with agencies to find other ways to make their regular programming more accessible and/or to assist agencies to develop programming specifically for immigrant/refugee women that is within the mandate of the community agency. The outcomes of the project are anticipated to be first, to have strengthened the capacity of individual agencies to include immigrant and refugee women in the activities of their organisations and second to have developed a network of North Shore agencies which are accessible and which can meet the basic range of priority service needs of immigrant and refugee women.

Organisational Context:

NSMS began as an anti-racism organisation and now provides settlement services to both immigrants and refugees. Approximately 60% of the agency's clients are women. NSMS began offering programs specifically for women in 1994 when a Women's Task Force was initiated, followed by a multi-ethnic drop-in group and workshops on such things as parenting and cultural traditions. The Task Force examined the needs of immigrant and refugee women on the North Shore, specifically looking at barriers to accessing mainstream services. Out of this, the ACCESS project was developed and has now been completed. NSMS is hiring multicultural resource workers to provide support to organisations for multicultural organisational change.

Immigrant, Visible Minority and Refugee Women and Governance:

Directors are nominated to the Board, and attention is paid to recruiting immigrant women from the agency's pool of volunteers. Approximately half of the Board members are immigrant women. The two coordinators and one member of the steering committee for the ACCESS project were visible minority women, as is the individual writing the final report.

Budgets and Administration:

At present, NSMS has also received funding from Canadian Heritage, the three municipalities on the North Shore and does some fundraising. With the end of the ACCESS Project and Drop-in funding, the only funding specifically for women's programming is that for the ESL program with child care for immigrant/refugee women, which comes from MRMI and the District of North Vancouver. Immigrant/refugee women are included in NSMS regular settlement programming, and make up approximately 60% of NSMS clients. Some seminars offered by NSMS are of interest more to women than to men. A program for senior women (which also includes some men) runs at NSMS under the auspices of the BC Coalition to Eliminate Abuse of Seniors, and is funded by the Ministry of Women's Equality.

Target Group:

The target group for the ACCESS project was immigrant and refugee women, and mainstream organisations providing services to these women. Organisations interested in multicultural organisational change were identified through a survey of 40 service providing agencies.

Main Outcomes:

The ACCESS project survey made a large number of organisations aware of the need for multicultural organisational change. Phase 2 of the ACCESS project provided a smaller number of participating organisations with skills to make their services more accessible by paying more attention to translation, reception skills, hiring bilingual staff from immigrant communities in their neighbourhood, finding strategies for doing outreach into immigrant communities, making information more accessible, changing forms, and incorporating diversity into visual displays at their agency.

Strategies:

The volunteer program provides basic office and English skills to immigrant and refugee women, increasing their self-confidence and increases their employability.

Staff are hired based on expertise in the particular project/service as well as knowledge (direct or indirect) of the immigration experience. Client volunteers receive one-on-one training by the volunteer coordinator and can gain Canadian work experience and letters of recommendation. Some volunteers are Social Work practicum students who learn about diversity and immigration issues.

Both the Immigrant/Refugee Women's Drop-in and the ACCESS Project came out of the Women's Task Force at NSMS, which itself came about as a result of a workshop held at NSMS in 1995 with immigrant/refugee women at which a number of priority needs were brought out, including the need to continue to come together for support, and to gain information, and the need for mainstream agencies to be more accessible as an underlying theme to feelings of alienation. The task Force, of whom the active members were a group of immigrant/refugee women, largely, although not entirely of Iranian origin, tried to get funding for an immigrant women's program at NSMS and were turned down. Two of the women began coordinating a drop-in on a volunteer basis, with space provided by NSMS.

When the present Executive Director came on staff at the end of January 1996, meetings were arranged with the funders and the two leaders of the Task Force, in order to explore the situation. Basically it was an ideological issue on the part of the funders, that immigrant/visible minority women should be served by the mainstream agencies such as the Women's Centre, rather than by a settlement agency. The Women's Centre pointed out that they were not prepared to take on more direct service activities, as they saw their mandate being one of policy and advocacy. It was also pointed out by the women in the Task Force that a drop-in or some other means of coming together was what the immigrant/visible minority women had themselves identified as a priority need. It was also pointed out that the women did not feel that the mainstream agencies were fully accessible to them, and if the goal was to see the immigrant and visible minority populace served by the mainstream, it seemed reasonable to explore what barriers existed, and to try to help willing agencies to eliminate these barriers. As a consequence of these meetings, it was agreed that Canadian Heritage women fund the drop-in at NSMS for at least a year (which turned into two), while co-funding the ACCESS Project which hopefully would make it possible for the drop-in to be moved to the Women's Centre, as one of the results of the project. The ACCESS Project itself could be seen as the next step in a continuum of activities on the North Shore to build acceptance and valuing of diversity, being immediately proceeded by the IMAP initiative (Interagency Multicultural Access Project) which had originally brought together four community agencies (North Shore Community Services, North Shore Neighbourhood House, Family Services of the North Shore and North Shore Multicultural Society) and resulted in a workshop series in the Spring of 19996 which most agencies on the North Shore attended, called "Professional Skills for a Multicultural Community."

The ACCESS project approached multicultural organisational change by helping organisations to understand that barriers are not caused only by communication and cultural difference, but also by systemic racism and assumptions inherent to the way that organisations structure themselves. The project targeted staff as opposed to directors, because staff are more often involved with clients. Highly skilled trainers were necessary to run the workshops.

Issues and Challenges:

For many organisations, multicultural organisational change is not a priority, or they do not have funding to implement changes. Staff are already over-worked and putting in many hours of volunteer time. Of 40 priority service providers surveyed, only 13 responded to the survey and, of those only 5 organisations expressed an interest in participating the ACCESS project at that time. It was not possible to embark on policy development work given the complexity of the task. Most organisations are over-worked, underfunded and lack support for doing policy work.

The staff turnover, as both coordinators left for other, and more long-term positions in line with their career objectives, had a definite effect on the project, causing lack of continuity and inevitable delays. After the second coordinator left, the steering committee made the decision not to hire another coordinator, but to ask the consultant to put in more time, and hire an individual to carry out the remaining tasks under her supervision. Unforeseen academic and other issues led to this individual not having sufficient time to carry out the tasks according to the timeline, and one of the planned activities was finally canceled as a result. However, the remaining tasks have been completed and the final report, which is intended to be helpful to organisations attempting similar tasks, should be done shortly. yet another individual, a visible minority woman with research and writing skills has been brought on to complete the report.

PACIFIC IMMIGRANT RESOURCES SOCIETY

Project/Program Description:

ARM, 1997-8, Volunteer development for immigrant women, $8,100.00
The focus of this project is to encourage and promote the participation of immigrant women in volunteer roles at all levels of PIRS work, i.e., as programme and office assistants, as organisers of special events, as PIRS representatives at community information fairs, as committee and Board members. Funds will be used to develop more effective recruitment materials and strategies and to provide enhanced training and support to immigrant women who are interested in volunteering, particularly, but not only, women who are involved in the PIRS LEAD and Building Bridges programs.

ISP, 1997-8, Language/Orientation/Support Group for Refugee Women, $16,025.00
This project is targeted specifically to women who are unable to access other ESL programs due to their status as refugee claimant (mainly, but not exclusively, Spanish speaking women). Fifteen to twenty women per term will participate in a neighbourhood based group program focusing on practical everyday English, information about community resources and services, and social support/networking. Quality on-site child care will enable women to participate and at the same time provide their young children with opportunities to develop the social and language skills needed for success in the Canadian school system. The goals/expected outcomes of the project are the enhanced ability of refugee women to access resources and services and to participate in Canadian community life.

ISP, 1997-8, Cambodian Women's Group, $13,780.00
This project is targeted specifically to Cambodian women who are facing linguistic, cultural, social, economic and other barriers to access and participation. Approximately 15 women per term will participate in a neighbourhood based group program; quality on-site child care will enable women to participate and at the same time provide their young children with opportunities to develop the social and language skills needed for success in the Canadian school system. The program will focus on the language, social and pre-employment needs of Cambodian women. The goals/expected outcomes of the project are the enhanced ability of Cambodian women to access resources and services and to participate in Canadian community life.

ISP, 1997-8, Somali Women's Group, $9,100.00

This project is targeted specifically to Somali women (and possibly other African and or Muslim women) who are facing linguistic, cultural, social, economic and other barriers to access and participation. Twelve to 15 women per term will participate in a neighbourhood based group program; quality on-site child care will enable women to participate and at the same time provide their young children with opportunities to develop the social and language skills needed for success in the Canadian school system. The goals/expected outcomes of the project are the enhanced ability of Somali women to access resources and services and to participate in Canadian community life.

ISP, 1997-8, ESL Literacy Program, $12,800.00

This project is targeted specifically to women who are unable to access/succeed in other ESL programs due to lack of literacy skills in their first language and in English. Approximately 15 women per term will participate in one of two neighbourhood based group programs; quality on-site child care will enable women to participate and at the same time provide their young children with opportunities to develop the social and language skills needed for success in the Canadian school system. The goals/expected outcomes of the project are the enhanced ability of immigrant women to access resources and services and to participate in Canadian community life.

Organisational Context:

PIRS began offering programs to immigrant women in 1976, the same year that they opened as an organisation. Since its inception, the primary goal of the organisation has been to meet the particular integration needs of immigrant and refugee women who are at home with children.

Immigrant, Visible Minority and Refugee Women and Governance:

Board and committee members are sought from the group of immigrant/refugee women volunteering at PIRS. Specific programs to encourage participation of immigrant/refugee women in decision-making bodies at PIRS have been developed. PIRS actively seeks to recruit as potential Board and committee members women who reflect the diversity of cultures in their community and programming. Currently the PIRS Board is composed of 10 members, 5 of whom are immigrant women. 18 or 24 members of various committees are also immigrant women.

Budgets and Administration:

PIRS also receives funding from the United Way, City of Vancouver, Canadian Heritage and Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Despite being women-centred, PIRS does not receive support from either the federal or provincial ministries for women.

Target Group:

PIRS offers programs to newcomers, immigrants who have resided in Canada for some time and refugees. The target group is primarily women who are home with pre-school aged children.

Main Outcomes:

PIRS programs provide ESL training to immigrant women who cannot succeed in regular ESL classes because of a need for child care, a more comfortable and informal environment and/or a lack of literacy in their own first language. The programs also provide a social group, fostering friendships and social relationships among immigrant/refugee women. Leadership training, support groups and volunteer programs provide women skills, confidence and Canadian workplace experience. Programs for children ease their entry into the Canadian school system. Clients primarily learn English, but also receive support and referrals. The LEAD and Building Bridges programs increase immigrant/refugee women's involvement in their communities.

Strategies:

When designing programs for immigrant women, attention is paid to practical issues such as access. Bus fare is provided when necessary. Programs are run during school hours, at easily accessible locations where participants can access mainstream services as well. Fees are reasonable and subsidies are available. Schools provide information about target populations in each neighbourhood. Outreach and advertising methods are customised according to the target population. To attract participants, skills-related training are offered in conjunction with ESL. In addition, valuing diversity and developing participant-centred services builds trust with communities. A flexible curriculum that links with what is taught in the children's program enhances the impact of the programs.

To maintain participation of board and committee members, special attention is paid to orienting new members, following up after meetings and reaching out to those who stop participating. Valuing a variety of types and styles of participation encourages diversity on boards and committees.

When recruiting and hiring staff, attention is paid to developing a clear job description and a profile of the desired applicant. Ensuring that support systems, such as personnel policies, team meetings, active coordination and professional development opportunities must be in place for staff working out of the office. Outreach staff must be both bilingual and bi-cultural, with personal experience of immigration/settlement. PIRS staff and volunteers role model successful integration for program participants. Women who work as volunteers in the child care program are sometimes hired on as staff.

PIRS offers consultations services to other organisations to deliver PIRS model ESL training so that immigrant women may receive these services in their own communities. When seeking community partners to run the ESL training, attention is paid to looking for partners who will encourage the women to participate in events and access mainstream programs and services.

Issues and Challenges:

Sometimes mainstream organisations do not take responsibility for gaps in their services because of the expectation that immigrant serving organisations will fill these gaps. Some mainstream organisations resist offering services to immigrants. This is experienced by PIRS as a tension between offering need assistance and offering consultation services.

WESTCOAST WOMEN'S RESOURCES SOCIETY

Project/Program Description:

ARM, 1997-8, Cross-Cultural Community Development Project - Stage Two, $10,000.00
The goal of stage two is to share and use the information gathered through stage one of the project to promote understanding and awareness of issues related to racism and Multiculturalism, to provide opportunities for increased positive interaction between people of different heritage, and to develop strategies and actions for continued work of this nature locally. Stage two will focus on providing information and education on local issues that have affect people of the area both historically (residential school, internment of the Japanese people during W.W.II) and currently (treaty negotiations and land claims, economic instability); understanding peer pressure and stereotyping; understanding and celebrating cultural differences and similarities. Specific activities include assistance to groups for the development of equity policies, coordination of educational and social activities such as guest speakers, videos, community potlucks and dances, story telling, and a two day community conference. As well as increased awareness and understanding within the community, the formation of an on-going cross-cultural relations committee and strategies for future work are expected.

Organisational Context:

The Westcoast Women's Resources Society runs a Transition House, Women's Centre and counseling programs for women, children and youth, offering advocacy, support and counseling to women in the Ucluelet and Tofino area. WWRS became a registered society in 1992 and undertook its first anti-racism project (in collaboration with Headlines Theatre) in 1995.

Immigrant, Visible Minority and Refugee Women and Governance:

Nuu Chah Nulth First Nation's women participated in the development, design and running of the project through the Steering Committee. Staff are unionised and have a collective agreement stating that WWRS seeks to recruit workers from diverse backgrounds. Currently, the WWRS Board is exclusively made up of women of European descent.

Budgets and Administration:

WWRS also receives funding from the Ministry of Women's Equality, Ministry of Children and Families, and project funding has been received from the Ministry of Human Resources and Canadian Heritage.

Target Group:

The project targeted the entire community in and around Ucluelet, specifically including Nuu Chah Nulth First Nations women in all levels (planning, managing and running) of the project.

Main Outcomes:

As a result of the project, a group of high school students have formed a collective against racism. There are friendlier relations in the community on a day-to-day basis. People in the community came to know each other better by eating together at the cross-cultural dinner and participated in workshops together. Racist attitudes and actions were revealed at the conference as being rooted in history. Communication between members of the community has increased, as has collaboration and awareness of each other's cultures. The project "took the lid off of racism" in a "small community" where "people need to know one another."

Strategies:

Strong partnerships with First Nation's organisations were developed, with an emphasis on trust-building and understanding of racism. The project drew substantially on the knowledge and experience of local community members. Recruitment and advertising through word-of-mouth and door-to-door visits was most successful.

Tensions within the Steering committee were dealt with openly and did not result in rifts or divisions. This was due to the process of the meetings, for example by beginning each meeting with a "check-in" to create a safe space for people in the group. Steering committee members were "committed to living what they are trying to bring to the community." Everyone in the organisation is active in educating themselves about racism.

Issues and Challenges:

Year-to-year funding limits the ability of the organisation to plan, and considerable time is spent generating project proposals and reports. Funding criteria that promotes multicultural projects means that ethnospecific programs/projects do not receive funding even as a need is evident for these.

APPENDIX 3
INTERVIEW THEMES

Introductions

Names, position titles, etc.

How long have you worked for the organisation? How long in this position?

What is your educational background?

What is your ethnic background?

What is your training for work in the immigrant/multicultural field?

Perceptions, Assumptions around Immigrant/Visible Minority Women

Who do you see as your primary client/participant/user group within the category of "immigrant" or "visible minority" women?

How do you define your target group of immigrant and visible minority women? Who participates in your programs? What are their characteristics (eg., age, language, country of origin, need, etc.)?

How do you perceive the needs of minority women in the community? What was the impetus for the project? How did you perceive the need for such a project? Why are these important?

How do you describe the nature of "community" in terms of multiculturalism and racism?

To what extent are the needs and concerns of immigrant and visible minority women recognised as distinct from women/minority men in general? Are they a priority in your organisation?

Program Design: Processes, Practices, Strategies

Tell me a little bit about the projects that you are involved in?

What kinds of strategies, approaches, techniques to you find useful/not useful in your programs for immigrant/visible minority women? How do you...

- recruit participants
- advertise the program
- establish support

- find and work with community partners
- sustain participant interest
- involve other family members
- evaluate programs

...and how long do each of these steps take?

How would you estimate the time and costs required if you were to run the project again?

What would you do differently if you were to run the project again?

What parts of the project are in need of improvement or modification?

Did/do you have enough staff for this project? How has this project impacted on the overall running of the Resource Centre?

Program Delivery/Staffing

How did you select your staff for this project? How do you generally select staff? What practices work most effectively in staff hiring and selection?

What criteria do you use in selecting staff?

How did you recruit volunteers for this project? What practices worked best in recruitment?

What equipment, facilities, personnel, materials, resources, support did/do you need to implement the project?

What needs to be in place prior to, during and after the project?

What is essential to the project success?

Measurables, Tangibles, Deliverables

This project was designed to reach a wide range of people. Tell me why you decided to target the groups that you did, and how each of those groups were approached.

Did any aspect of the project reach out to immigrant and visible minority women specifically? Describe how gender analysis was incorporated into the project?

How many individuals were contacted during the project in total? How many immigrant and visible minority women were contacted during the project?

Can you identify specific outcomes this project has achieved...

- for individual participants?
- for local community?
- for your organisation?
- for volunteers?

- for issues, needs, concerns, attitudes, climate etc. for immigrant and visible minority women in general?
- for the wider community?
- for other organisations in the community (collaboration, partnering, linking, information sharing, etc.)
- how would you describe the outcomes or effects of this project in your own terms?
- did you achieve your goals? why or why not?

Spin-offs, linkage and networks

As a result of this project, are groups coming together to collaborate more? If yes, on what kinds of projects?

Do you see increased activity, more interest, more collaborations, networks, groups forming, changes in atmosphere (eg., greater awareness, sensitivity, more positive attitude toward newcomers and minorities, more openness and willingness to address issues, more acceptance of difference) as a result of this project?

Do you see any negative spin-off effects as a result of this project? eg., Organisations withdrawing or refusing to offer services/participate in multicultural area because of the project that you undertook?

Where do you see the community going from here?

What kinds of referrals does your organisation offer to immigrant and visible minority women?

If there is nowhere to refer people to, what kinds of services would help?

Conflicts, Difficulties, Problems

What kinds of tensions have you experienced in attempting to implement this project?

Has the project generated unforeseen problems within your group/organisation?

Has the project generated unforeseen conflicts or tensions in the target group?

Did you experience any resistance, negative behaviour or attitudes in implementing and running the project? From where?

How does your organisation make decisions concerning competing demands from projects/programs directed at immigrant/visible minority women in relation to other groups and other demands?

Finance/Administration/Policy

Do you see more or less financial stability in your organisation as a result of this project?

What effects did receiving funding for this project have on your organisation?

Do you see your organisation doing more or less in this area now? In the future?

What proportion of the total budget is targeted specifically to the needs of immigrant/visible minority women?

How are your programs for immigrant/visible minority women funded?

Where else have you applied for funding for this project? For other projects/programs for immigrant/visible minority women?

What other sources of funding have you found?

What government agencies do you collaborate with?

Empowerment of Immigrant Women

What kinds of empowerment strategies, policies, procedures, structures are in place to support and encourage immigrant women to participate in decision making in your organisation? In this specific project?

Are immigrant/visible minority women represented on your board? On committees? (Are there programs/processes/procedures in place to recruit, train or mentor immigrant and visible minority women into board or committee positions?)

Do community members serve on boards/committees? How do they get on the boards/committees?

How involved have immigrant/visible minority women been in the design and management of the project?

How have immigrant/visible minority women been integrated into the decision making and implementation structure of your organisation?

Do you have specific board policies regarding racial and ethnic diversity and representation?

What type of professional development training do you provide to staff to ensure culturally appropriate services to immigrant/visible minority women?

The Role of the Ministry

How could the Ministry (and your liaison contact) be more helpful in helping you to achieve your objectives?

Did you experience any specific barriers/difficulties/problems with MRMI forms, information, staff, administrative procedures, definitions, guidelines, timelines, reporting procedures, funding criteria, etc.?

What did you find helpful when working with MRMI?

What did you find unhelpful?

Attitudes and Behaviour Changes

What kinds of changes in behaviour or attitude have you noticed in (yourself, your volunteers, your staff, the community, wider society, other professionals, service providers, etc.) as a result of this project? (positive and negative)

To what extent did your project address racism and sexism? What outcomes can you identify?

Is there anything else that you would like to talk about?

APPENDIX 4
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

We would like to acknowledge the generous contribution of time and the valuable insights contributed by the respondents of this study.

Shashi Assanand
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Mary Clare Zak
Laurie Hearty
Patsy George
Lanielle Tom

APPENDIX 5
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